The Bookman.

"I am a Bookman."—*James Russell Lowell.*

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All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of The Bookman, St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

A preliminary letter of inquiry should be sent to the Editor before any manuscript is submitted for his consideration.

News Notes.

No spring announcement is more welcome than that of a new book by Mr. Rudyard Kipling. His "Letters of Travel" will be published shortly by Messrs. Macmillan. The letters record the author's journeyings about the world through places as far apart as Egypt and Canada.

Messrs. Macmillan are publishing this spring Sir George Arthur's "Life of Kitchener"; Mr. Harold Begbie's "Life of William Booth, the Founder of the Salvation Army"; and "The Letters of Henry James," edited by Mr. Percy Lubbock; three books whose publication was unavoidably postponed from last autumn.

Messrs. Duckworth have published Mr. Alfred Sutro's play, "The Choice," produced at Wyndham's Theatre last year, and still running. It has a strong after-the-war interest which gives it a certain timeliness; its chief character, the uncompromising superman, John Ingleby Cordways, who sacrifices love and his hope of happiness to his conviction of what is right, is cleverly and sympathetically drawn; and the whole play is so admirably written that it is as good to read as to act, and appeals as powerfully in the reading as it does on the stage.

"Prelude," a novel of public school life, by Beverley Nichols, will be published this month by Messrs. Chatto & Windus.

Messrs. Chatto & Windus have added an eighth volume, "The Chorus Girl, and Other Stories," translated by Constance Garnett, to the collection of "The Tales of Tchehov" (3s. net each) which they are publishing in their St. Martin's Library series.

Mr. W. H. Mallock has written the story of his life and literary career, and, under the title of "Memoirs of Life and Literature," it is to be published shortly by Messrs. Chapman & Hall.

Captain A. Cunningham Reid, D.F.C., has put into "Planes and Personalities: a Potpourri," which Messrs. Philip Allan & Co. have in the press, something of his experiences as a fighting pilot and a number of good stories about the many social and other stars he has taken as passengers on peaceful flights.

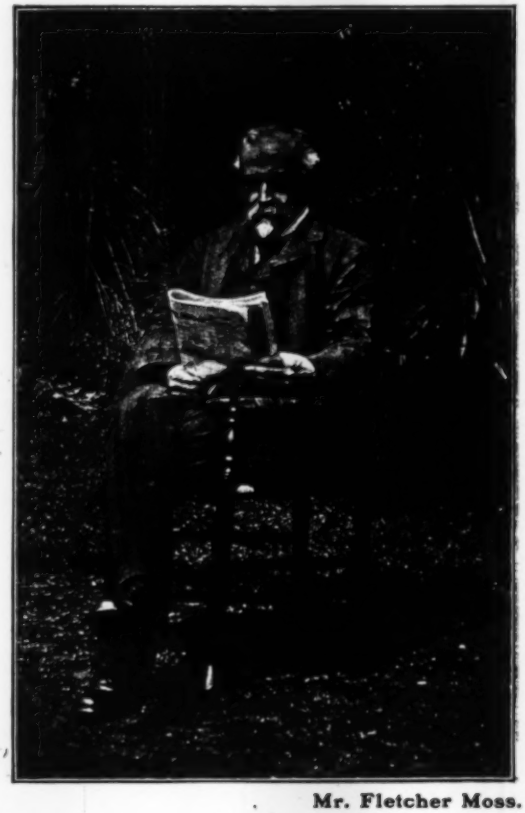
A new novel, "The Tragic Bride," by Francis Brett Young, will be published by Mr. Martin Secker this spring.

XUM

General Townshend's important book, "My Campaign in Mesopotamia," is to be published almost immediately by Mr. Thornton Butterworth. It tells for the first time in full detail, and with uncompromising frankness, the true story of the first expedition towards Bagdad which ended with the heroic defence and the fall of Kut.

"Great Irishmen," which Mr. Andrew Melrose is publishing shortly, is a series of twenty studies in personality by Joseph Keating and others, under the general editorship of Felix Lavery.

On December 26th, there passed away at the Old Parsonage, Didsbury, Mr. Fletcher Moss, the author of "Pilgrimages to Old Homes," "Folk-lore, Old Customs, and Tales of my Neighbours," and other books. "Pilgrimages" appeared in six volumes between 1901 and 1913; "Folk-lore" is an earlier production, and was published in 1898. A seventh volume of "Pilgrimages" is now being printed by Messrs. Spottiswoode & Ballantyne of London, and it is anticipated that copies will be obtainable at an early date. Like many other authors, Mr. Moss spent his earlier years in business so exclusively that it was not until he had attained the age of forty-seven that he found time to publish



Mr. Fletcher Moss.

his first work, a volume devoted to local history. It is probable that he was encouraged to proceed with the publication of the subsequent volumes of "Pilgrimages," by a review of the first series which appeared in the *Spectator*. After some preliminary castigation, the writer made appreciative comments, indicating that he had discovered something of more than usual interest. The result was that Mr. Moss resolved to spend his spare time in making more visits to the lovely old homes of England, and to travel farther afield, and attempt more ambitious subjects. When the second volume appeared in 1903, he had withdrawn from business and become a man of leisure, devoting his time largely to administrative duties, literary pursuits, and the life of a country gentleman. His intimate knowledge of the life, manners and customs of the country, a knowledge he had possessed since boyhood, enabled him to write with a familiarity and insight that added considerably to the interest of his books. At the time of his death Mr. Fletcher Moss was in his seventy-seventh year. He was a Justice of the Peace for Lancashire, an Alderman of the city of Manchester, and a member of the Lancashire and Cheshire Society of Antiquaries, of which body he was a past president. His early education was received at Cheltenham College and Merchiston Castle School, Edinburgh, once the home of John Napier, the inventor of logarithms.

Mr. Howard Pease,
whose striking book of "Border Ghost Stories" was published by Mr. Erskine Macdonald last autumn.

R.J. SWAN.

Mr. Melrose has published a sixth edition of Mr. John Ferguson's arresting little book, "Thyrea, and Other Sonnets" (1s. net). The first edition appeared in 1912, and about two hundred copies were sold. The war came, and seemed to blot it out altogether. Then, about two years ago, the author sent some additional sonnets, asking if these could be included in a new edition, and a new and enlarged edition of a thousand copies was issued, with a preface by Mr. W. L. Courtney. This sold out immediately and it has now been five times reprinted. The sonnets that made the original booklet were written in a sanatorium and, perhaps inevitably, have, as Mr. Courtney says, reminded some critics of Henley's Hospital poems. The additional sonnets are on such widely varying themes as "On Hearing Chopin's Marche Funebre," and, in some realistically picturesque lines, "On a Low Comedian," "To David Gray," and "At a Pawnbroker's Window," and both in his moods of high seriousness, and in his bizarre sketches of characters of the stage and the streets Mr. Ferguson writes with a deep sense of the beauty and sadness of human life, and a real gift for expressing these in the music and language of poetry.

A new novel by Mrs. Violet Tweedale, "The Beautiful Mrs. Davenant," will be published this month by Mr. Herbert Jenkins.

"Adventures in Marriage," by Ward Muir, which Messrs. Simpkin, Marshall have just published, analyses in a series of stories the problems and difficulties of modern married life.

Alfred Ollivant,

whose life and work are the subject of an article, "Alfred Ollivant: the Author and the Man," in this Number.

In reviewing last month Emile Guillaumin's novel, "The Life of a Simple Man" (Selwyn & Blount) our reviewer remarked that it is a mystery why this book had not been crowned by the French Académie. The translator writes that, as a fact, it was crowned by the Académie.

Mr. J. Thomas Looney,

whose new book, "Shakespeare Identified," Messrs. Cecil Palmer & Hayward are publishing.

"A Study of Shakespeare's Verse," by M. A. Bayfield, author of "The Measures of the Poets," includes an inquiry into the trustworthiness of the early texts, a revised text of Antony and Cleopatra, and aims to give an account of the structure of Shakespeare's dramatic verse, and prove that many thousands of lines are given in modern texts in a form that their author would have abhorred. The book will be published shortly by the Cambridge Press.

The Cambridge Press is shortly publishing a second edition of "The English-Speaking Brotherhood, and the League of Nations," by Sir Charles Walston, for which the author has written a new preface.

There is a general feeling even among trade unionists themselves that certain details of their programme, once essential, have fallen out of date and need revision. On the other hand, it is as generally felt that the mechanism of finance and the control of industry are no longer applicable to the altered conditions of the modern world, and the hope of progress lies in a scientific adaptation of that old machinery to the more democratic life of the new era. Major C. H. Douglas studies these problems in "Economic Democracy," which Mr. Cecil Palmer is about to publish, and shows in what directions we may expect to find a remedy for our present discontents.

Mr. Cecil Palmer will publish this spring, "First Poems," by Ruth Pitter, whose verse in one or two of the weeklies has attracted a good deal of attention.

"Two Sisters," a new book by Ralph Harold Bretherton, a clever young journalist who has two or three able novels to his credit, will be published shortly by Messrs. Allen & Unwin.

Mr. Leonard Parsons, managing director of the new publishing firm of Leonard Parsons, Limited, has been connected with the house of the well-known publisher, Mr. Eveleigh Nash, since it was established in 1903. Associated with him as a director is Mr. Maurice A. Marston, who, since his discharge from the Army, has been engaged in the publishing business. The new firm aims at producing books of real quality in all branches of literature, and is preparing to issue a distinctive series dealing with political, social and economic questions of the day.

Hedgeley Moor.

From "Highways and By-ways in Northumbria," by P. Anderson Graham, with illustrations by Hugh Thomson, which Messrs. Macmillan are publishing shortly.

Hendersons, of Charing Cross Road, have in the press, "Mr. Smith in Paradise and Other Satires," by Arthur F. Thorn, who will be remembered by lovers of Jefferies for his monograph on "Richard Jefferies and Civilisation." A frontispiece illustration has been drawn for his new book by Mr. Will Dyson, the most brilliant of our (or Australia's) pictorial satirists.

In a most practical spirit, probably because she has had many years of actual experience in the subject, Miss Agnes Platt has written "Practical Hints on Playwriting" (3s. 6d. net. Stanley Paul), a useful handbook for aspiring young dramatists. One gathers that Miss Platt has no great faith in the sort of play that appeals only to a limited and superior section of the community, and has to be produced by a stage society because the ordinary manager cannot afford to handle it as a matter of business. This is a nice point which cannot be discussed in a limited space, but Miss Platt is undoubtedly right in looking to the ordinary intelligent public as the final arbiter who settles the destinies of all plays, and in urging the practical dramatist, who expects to live now and in the future, to learn how to write so that his work may appeal to the general world of playgoers. After all, the greatest authors of plays and of novels had large followings in their own days. The public can appreciate the best a man can do, if he knows how to do it in the best way; and with Shakespeare, Sheridan and Goldsmith setting him a good example, the young dramatist may recognise the common sense of Miss Platt's advice that he should not write solely to please himself, but to please the age for which he is writing. That is part of his business; and if he will not master the whole of his art he has no ground for complaint if he does not succeed. In a word, if he will not try to please the public, he must not blame the public because it is not pleased. Miss Platt bases her hints on the knowledge she has gathered as reader of plays for a West End management, and as a producer of plays herself.

The two latest volumes of Meredith that Messrs. Constable have included in their handsome Standard Edition of his works are "The Amazing Marriage" and "One of Our Conquerors" (7s. 6d. net each).

An account of the armoured train work in France and Flanders in the early days of the war, "Naval Guns in Flanders: 1914–1915," by L. R. F., with maps and illustrations, will be published immediately by Messrs. Constable.

Commencing with the February Number, "The "Nineteenth Century and After" will be published by Messrs. Constable. As heretofore, the policy of the review will remain independent and uncontrolled by any group or party.

We all describe ourselves as democrats nowadays, but as we are not in agreement as to what is meant by that term there is room for such a book as Mr. J. C. Brown's "The Meaning of Democracy," which Mr. Cobden-Sanderson is publishing. Mr. Brown discusses such questions as Party Politics, Direct Action, the Control of Industry, analyses the leading

concepts of political theory, such as Liberty and Equality, and shows what a democracy is when it is stripped of misconceptions and irrelevancies.

The directors of Messrs. Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co., Ltd., have presented Mr. William Lowman, who has been in the employment of the Eton College Press for sixty-five years, with a silver salver in appreciation of his long service. Mr. Lowman was apprenticed in 1854, to Mr. Williams, who then owned the Eton printing establishment; later he served the younger Mr. Williams, who was followed in 1884 by Mr. Ingalton Drake, from whom the present owners purchased the business in 1901. For many years Mr. Lowman's name appeared in the imprint on the last page of the well-known Eton College *Chronicle*.

Mr. A. P. Sinnett, whose "Collected Fruits of Occult Teaching" has just been published by Mr. Fisher Unwin, is one of the leading lights of Theosophy, and an able exponent of reincarnation and the evolution of races. He has distilled into his book the information he claims to have derived from his occult experiences about the human soul and its hereafter.

Paul Whitehead.

From "The Life of Thomas Coutts, Banker," by E. H. Coleridge (John Lane), reviewed in this Number.

In attempting a new rendering of "Sappho," which Messrs. Hutchinson publish, Mr. de Vere Stacpoole entered upon a task of more than ordinary difficulty, but his masterly translations of Villon warrant one in hoping to find that he has succeeded where so many translators have failed.

A new weekly, *The Englishman*, is a nationalist organ devoting itself specially to the interests of the English part of the British nation. It made a very promising start last week under the editorship of Mr. W. R. Titterton and Mr. J. O. Armstrong.

Mrs. W. K. Clifford's play, "A Long Duel," referred to in our last month's article on her work, was published in book form by Mr. John Lane. Her book of "Anyhow Stories for Children" was reissued with additions by Messrs. Duckworth in 1899; and her latest novel, "Miss Fingal," was published by Messrs. Blackwood last year, and not in 1917, as our contributor stated.

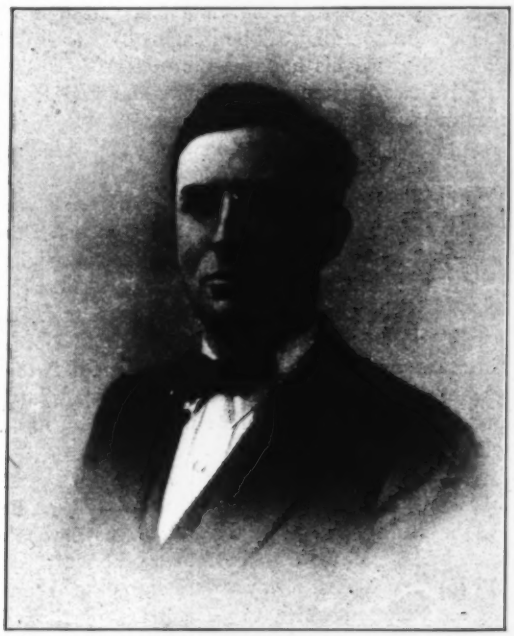


Photo by O. Robinson & Co., Dublin. **Mr. Brinsley Mac Namara,**

whose new novel, "The Clanking of Chains," has just been published by Messrs. Maunsel. Mr. Mac Namara's first book, "The Valley of the Squinting Windows," met with a brilliant success both here and in America.

XUM

THE READER.

JOHAN BOJER.

By William Archer.

JOHAN BOJER (please pronounce Boyer), one of the two or three leading figures in the literary life of Norway, is entirely a man of the people. A native of the Trondhjem region (born 1872), he began life in the humblest circumstances. He was by turns a fisher-boy and a cowherd. He learned to read at a school which he attended but two days a week. Not till he was fifteen did he make his way to a county school kept by one Dybdahl, who implanted in him a love of letters. Dybdahl, he says, was "all fire and flame" when he read "Peer Gynt" to his scholars, moving them to tears—not unmixed, one may hope, with laughter. At eighteen he entered a school for non-commissioned officers at Trondhjem, where he remained for three years. It was at this period that he learned our language from an hotel porter, who afterwards proved to be a murderer—not merely of English. He was also a constant attendant at popular lectures, and was greatly influenced by a discourse delivered in the early nineties by Knut Hamsun, already a novelist of high repute.

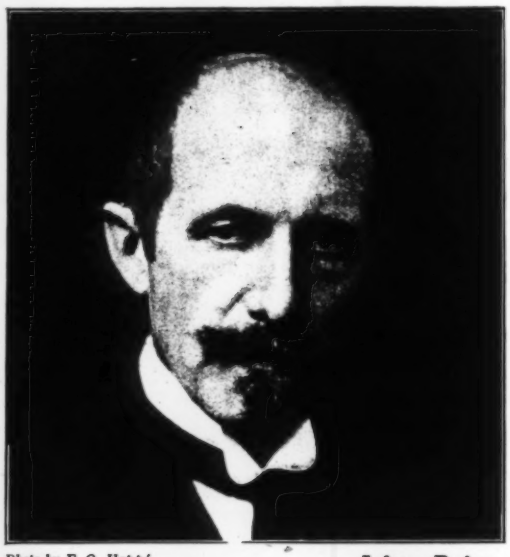


Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Johan Bojer.**

He did not go into the army, but worked at the Lofoten fisheries, was for some time a sewing-machine agent, and afterwards clerk in a store. So early as 1894, however, when he was only twenty-two, he had a play, "A Mother," produced with some success in Trondhjem. It is true he earned only some £35 by it, but that was not bad for a small town, more celebrated for its cathedral than for its theatre. Shortly after, he published his first story, "Helga," and scraped together enough money to carry him to Copenhagen and Paris. His exchequer being exhausted he joined company with the poet Obstfelder, and the two made their way on foot from Paris to Amsterdam, sleeping under hay-stacks, but not neglecting the churches and picture galleries of the Netherlands. From Amsterdam they found a passage home in a sailing-ship.

The winter of 1895–96 Bojer spent in Copenhagen, writing letters for a Trondhjem paper at five-and-sixpence a letter, and attending the lectures of Harald Höffding and Valdemar Vedel. It was in 1896 that he first gained the ear of the public with a political novel, "Et Folketog."* The worst of the struggle was now over, though it was not until seven years later that "The Power of a Lie" established his position in the front rank.

This varied and adventurous apprenticeship to life has obviously been of the greatest value to Bojer. We can read in it a restless curiosity and an eager pre-occupation with things of the spirit. The novelist has gone through many experiences, some of them (such as a winter with the Lofoten fishing-fleet) of the very roughest description. But he has from the first mastered his experiences, seen them in relation to the whole scheme of things, and drawn from them, not, indeed, a formal philosophy, but a sense of the greatness, the marvellousness, what may perhaps be called the excitingness of life, to which his books unquestionably owe their high vitality. It must be remembered that he came to maturity in the years of the great political struggle which in the first place gave Norway a completely democratic constitution, and then led to her final severance from Sweden. A more awakening period for an observant and philosophically-minded youth could hardly be imagined.

Bojer has tried his hand at more than one literary form. He has written several folk tales and at least one fantastic romance, "The Prisoner Who Sang." He has produced a tragedy, "Brutus," and three more or less tragic dramas—"Theodora," "Love's Eyes" and "Sigurd Braa"—as well as a dramatisation of "The Power of a Lie." But, though "Sigurd Braa" was a great success on the stage, he has not entirely mastered the dramatic form. Norwegian playwrights all labour under one inevitable disadvantage: it is impossible not to compare them with Ibsen and Björnson, or, in other words, with the greatest dramatists of the nineteenth century: and if they prove somewhat less than giants, we are apt (quite unfairly) to set them down as dwarfs.

It is undoubtedly in what may be called (rather cumbrously) the ethical-psychological novel that Bojer has done his best work. To say that his psychology has an ethical or didactic bias would be untrue and unfair; but he almost always chooses an ethical conflict as the medium in which to present his psychological studies. In this respect "The Power of a Lie" is typical. He is not content to portray the character of old Knut Norby in ordinary, typical conditions: he

* I have not read this book, and am not sure how the title ought to be translated. It means literally "A Folk-March." For the foregoing biographical details I am indebted to "Johan Bojer: en Studie," by Carl Gad.

invents a quite probable but certainly far from usual case of conscience, which brings out dormant characteristics, and shows instincts and impulses working at high pressure. If it were not for the series of trifling circumstances whereby Knut is tempted to postpone telling his wife that he has backed Wangen's bill, he might go to his grave an honest man, his moral cowardice, his baseness and his capacity for self-deception lurking undeveloped in the depths of his soul. It is doubtful whether Bojer has not carried the old man's power of paltering with conscience to the verge of the paradoxical. Can we quite believe it possible for a man who has cruelly compassed another's ruin to emerge from the mental conflicts it costs him in a condition of smug and placid self-approval? Norby is not a man of the criminal type who has passed "beyond good and evil," beyond either approval or disapproval, into a condition of fierce primitive egoism. We are asked to conceive that his moral instincts are still operative, and that he leaves the court of conscience not only acquitted but applauded—not only superficially at ease, but without so much as a hidden ache or qualm. This puts some strain on our power of belief; and yet it is impossible to lay a finger on any single trait and say, "Here, or here, the author oversteps the limit of the credible." On the contrary, we feel each little further slip into the quicksand to be not only possible but inevitable—the one probable reaction of character to circumstance. The book shows constructive faculty of a very high order, and if, towards the end, it seems a trifle hurried and sketchy, one is little disposed to complain of the sound tradition of Norwegian literature which says, "Rather too little than too much."

Johan Bojer and his family
on the veranda of his house at Hvalstad, Norway.

Again, in the oddly-named "Vort Rige" ("Our Kingdom") we are presented with a probable, but certainly not an everyday, case of ethical pathology. Erik Evje is the exact opposite of Knut Norby. Knut has a conscience with an ostrich-like power of digesting and assimilating crime; whereas Erik's conscience is so queasy that sins rather of omission than of commission keep it chronically dyspeptic. At last he conceives a plan for expiating the ill he has done by playing the gracious benefactor to a number of poor people, and setting them up in conditions of unhoped-for prosperity. No sooner has he done so, however, than it appears that the small holdings he has made over to them are undermined by water and threatened with a landslide. He will not believe, and he encourages his beneficiaries to disbelieve, the warnings that are given them; but nature takes no account of benevolent intentions, and the catastrophe happens. Erik Evje's sickly egoism thus proves even more maleficent than Norby's robuster form of the universal vice. As men plant a screen of fir-trees to protect them from biting winds, so Erik has planted his little colony of peasant proprietors as a screen for his shivering conscience. His philanthropy is pure self-indulgence.

A much finer novel than either of these, and the summit, as yet, of Bojer's achievement, is "The Great Hunger," in which he anticipated by a couple of years Mr. Wells's idea of writing a modern Book of Job. The book is too well known to call for analysis. Let me only say that I know of few more moving things in fiction than the letter in which Peer Tröen tells of his final disaster and the way in which he rises above it. His little daughter has been killed by the savage dog of a malicious neighbour. The peasants boycott the owner of the dog, and he can procure no barley to sow his patch of ground. But Peer rises in the night, takes of his own store, and sows his enemy's field. This is how the letter ends:

"We are flung by the indifferent laws of the universe into a life that we cannot order as we would; we are ravaged by injustice, by sickness and sorrow, by fire and flood. . . . And yet man smiles and laughs in the face of his tragic fate. In the midst of his thraldom he has created the beautiful on earth; in the midst of his torments he has had so much surplus energy of soul that he has sent it radiating forth into the cold deeps of space and warmed them with God.

"So marvellous art thou, O spirit of man! So godlike in thy very nature! Thou dost reap death, and in return

thou sowest the dream of everlasting life. In revenge for thine evil fate, thou dost fill the universe with an all-loving God. . . .

"Dear friend, it was thus I felt. And when the corn was sown, and I went back, the sun was glancing over the shoulder of the hill. There, by the fence, stood Merle looking at me. She had drawn a kerchief forward over her brow, after the fashion of the peasant women, so that her face was in shadow; but she smiled to me—as if she, too, the stricken mother, had risen up from the ocean of her suffering, that here, in the daybreak, she might take her share in the creating of God."

"The Face of the World" is a far less powerful book than "The Great Hunger." It is decidedly sketchy—one might almost say flimsy. Yet it contains two admirably studied characters. The hero, Dr. Harald Mark, may be called in a certain sense a man after the author's own heart, for he merely carries to excess that alert interest in "the face of the world," the great mundane spectacle, which is so prominent in Bojer's own mentality. Dr. Mark's interest is not merely alert, it is hyper-sensitive. It amounts to monomania. The injustices and cruelties of existence so torture him that it is an agony to read the daily paper—which has, nevertheless, a fatal fascination for him. We all know men—excellent and estimable men—in whom the germs of this disease are distinctly present. By studying an acute case, Bojer shows that, when it is allowed to reach this stage, it impairs the patient's efficiency and may lead to disaster. The second character-study is still more powerful. It portrays a victim to erotic obsession—a man who cherishes a hopeless passion for a woman utterly beyond his reach, who scarcely recognises his existence. Such cases are familiar to us in romantic poetry—witness Schiller's "Ritter Toggenburg" and countless other adorers of the unapproachable. Bojer ruthlessly divests the affliction of the glamour of troubadourism, and places it in its true light as a subject for the alienist—a devastating mental disease. The figure of the luckless Ivar Holth is drawn with extraordinary power.

His latest book, "Dyrendal"—the name of an estate—is perhaps the most satisfying thing, artistically, that Bojer has done. It is not moving and beautiful, like "The Great Hunger." It is uniformly grey in tone, and it contains only one or two episodic characters who have any outlook beyond the narrow intellectual and moral horizon of the Norwegian peasant. There is no one in its pages who shows the slightest concern for the mundane spectacle, or even dreams that such a thing exists. It is nothing but a singularly sober and objective rendering of a woman's character and history. Bojer might have borrowed a title from Maupassant and called the book "Et Liv"—"Une Vie." It does not hold one in the reading so strongly as some of his other works; but on looking back one recognises in it a very largely planned, well balanced, austere work of art.

There is a tendency among Bojer's countrymen to depreciate his talent, and deny him a place in the front rank of contemporary novelists. It is, I think, an indefensible, but not inexplicable, tendency. Bojer is above everything a rationalist, and the fashion of the moment—traceable, no doubt, to Russian influence—is for irrationalism in fiction. The novelist who is not at home in the psychology of the incoherent is considered but a pedestrian performer. It is reckoned a demerit in Bojer that the characters he portrays, when tested by our own experience and observation, appeal to us as probable, comprehensible—in a word, true. Your modern genius of the first order seeks to impress us, on the contrary, by making his personages feel, think and act in ways to which our experience and observation afford us no clue. When a character does something that no sane man would ever think of, we cry, "*Credo quia impossibile!*" and are lost in admiration. I am far from denying that the school of incoherence has produced some very notable work; but I suggest that the school of coherence has also its justification, and that Johan Bojer is one of its masters.

ALFRED OLLIVANT: THE AUTHOR AND THE MAN.*

BY J. P. COLLINS.

OF the writing of books there is this to add to what Solomon said, that it may waken the soul in a stricken man, and make him articulate for the entertainment or the edification of his kind. One thinks of Schubert betaking himself to composition after he had worked his hands into semi-paralysis; and George du Maurier because he found his eyesight failing. These are random instances of many where nature justifies herself against the evidence, and individual courage finds sustaining herbs, you may say, growing on the cliff-edge of misery. Some of us have long made a favourite of a better example still, perhaps, of resourcefulness in unusual adversity, and his name is Alfred Ollivant. I have never met him, nor do I share a friend with him so far as I am aware. But to me he ranks among the noble army of martyrs who have waged a better fight than most of us who labour under no disadvantage. And if we honour Job for a passive resistance, there should be nothing wanting in our homage to men who, by facing calamity with resolution, have contrived, as Blake said, to "build a heaven in hell's despair."

Now that we seem committed to biography, a few particulars may serve. Mr. Ollivant, the son of a colonel in the Royal Horse Artillery, has ancestral links with poetry and learning away back to the laureate of "The Faerie Queene." One of his grandsires, a Bishop of Llandaff, figured in the great Colenso controversy, and helped to burn in Convocation that thorny volume,

* "Two Men." A Novel. 7s. net.—"The Next Step." An Essay. 3s. 6d. net.—And Other Tales. By Alfred Ollivant, Author of "Owd Bob." (Allen & Unwin.)

"Essays and Reviews." The other was Dr. Blunt who wrote the once-famous treatise on "Miracles," and if he had persuaded Macready to accept a play of his, instead of merely annotating it, he would have achieved a miracle of his own. There must be something, though, in an embryo theologian who gets so near the footlights and then makes Cambridge console him with a St. Margaret's Professorship of Divinity. It may not make one think the better of Church or Stage, but it argues philosophic balance in the stock; so perhaps it is here, and not in the incendiary bishop, that we may find antecedent warrant for our theme. He saw the light in 1874, and after roughing it at Rugby, elected for the Army like his father before him. He

Alfred Ollivant, 1891.

went through "the Shop" at Woolwich, and got his commission in the Royal Artillery along with notable honours—Senior Gunnery, the Toombe Scholarship, and the Riding Prize. Then came the touch of tragedy that Macready had sought in vain, and army ambitions vanished in thin air.

A severe fall from a horse landed our subaltern into the hands of the surgeons for the next fourteen years, and by the time Mr. William Treves and the late Sir Victor Horsley set him up again that commission had become an old and bitter memory. A prisoner for years on the flat of his back might well have voted himself to the social scrap-heap, but there were precious faculties burning for use. When at length he found himself on his feet again, it was to face the world in the character of an accepted author, with a couple of highly original books to his name and a third in the offing. How many schemes must have floated in and out through that sick-room window is one of those questions where, as old Sir Thomas Browne says, we

Alfred Ollivant, 1897.

may hazard a wide solution. One day the patient had been reading R. L. S., and the Pastoral in "Memories and Portraits" set his mind off at a tangent. So there grew into being that famous quartet, James Moore and his grey dog of Kenmuir, Adam McAdam and his shaggy other self, Black Wull. In the duel between these men there is no comparison, for the stunted misanthrope, McAdam, outweighs his neighbour in intensity and grip. James Moore is simply a type of magnanimity, like a speaking shadow out of some old morality play; but the widowed hermit with the idolatrous belief in a hound that plays him false, is passionately real in every snarl. Like Shylock and Milton's Satan, Adam is so far supreme from the dramatic standpoint that you forget the moral claim of his antagonist. But there is

Alfred Ollivant, 1899.

no such conflict of planes in the case of the two dogs. Black Wull is a midnight marauder, a sheep-slayer of the stealthy type; and it takes a book to track him down, helped by one of the greatest dogs ever conceived by Dr. John Brown or anybody else.

Need it be said that the name of the book is "Owd Bob"? It made a modest and discouraging entry (1898), but the world has long since taken the great bushy, sad-eyed, silver-coated hero to its heart and will not let go. Over half a million copies have been sold, apart from the recent cheap edition, and still the book grows in fame. The *Spectator*, which dismissed it in a contemptuous line or two, has mentioned it over and over again with respect since then; and as good company breeds kindly manners, who knows but some day it will own its mistake? At the worst, this was only representative of the stolid British public, after all. Those who recall the novel's arrival will remember how it fought its way slowly, month by month. Not until Nelsons gave it a sixpenny edition, ten years after its birth, did "Owd Bob" begin to forge ahead. It was America that really discovered Mr. Ollivant, as it did George Meredith; and Dr. Lyon Phelps, of Yale, wrote years ago that he had only met one Englishman who ever heard of the book. That "Englishman" was Sir James Barrie, and the doctor's remark is artless enough to be Irish, so the circle is complete. A story so familiar by this time needs no summary: it is simply an epic of fierce emulation in a region where a man's dog is more to him than his very soul. Nothing petty or artificial can live in such an atmosphere, and the gamut of emotion in "Owd Bob" rings true throughout. Somewhere the author mixes Achilles up with Ajax, and stumbles upon "wot" when he means "wist." But his prose beats with a compelling power; if the dialect is serrated, it cuts through every obstacle; and as for the picturing of mood and landscape and storm, it shows a master's touch.

Nobody but a dog-lover need tackle "Owd Bob"—or "Bob, Son of Battle," as the American title goes—

Mrs. Ollivant.

and the same holds good of the novel that followed. After all, the man who has no heart for dogs is not likely to thrill at the touch of any romance ever penned. "Danny" first made its bow—or bark, whichever you like—in the *Monthly Review*. After a brief appearance in covers (1903) it went out of print, and since, like the artist that he is, the author remodelled it, the book has gained enormously. In structure it remains a vendetta against a Dandie Dinmont, with a dead mistress as a kind of angel guardian hovering round him, and a pair of tough old retainers as a group of seconds at his back. But the workmanship reveals a great advance in the handling of humans, and if anyone desires to see a feudal laird quelling a maudlin witch into shivering sobriety, he will find it in Chapter XXI. It reads as if Meg Merrilees were haled before a humanised Weir of Hermiston, and neither the great Sir Walter nor Robert the Romancer might disavow the authorship. "Danny," as a dog, deserves what the old gamekeeper said to the author of "Rab"—"he just never can get enough o' fechtin.'" But like his elder brother, the grey dog of Kenmuir, he is fighter and gentleman as well. Can our dogs always say the same of us?

Irony runs through much of our author's work, like a steadying undertone, but it proceeds from an exigent optimism without a trace of misanthropy. In that wholesome vein he has written book after book. Better than "Redcoat Captain," published in the year of his recovery, is "The Gentleman" (1908), in so far as it expresses the joy of resuming active life. A novel of strife, it contains a magnificent sea-fight, and it celebrates the author's passion for his native Sussex and the downs. "The Taming of Jolax Blunt" (1911) needs re-writing, and bids fair to emerge as "Danny" has done, better and sounder for the process. Then came a phase which showed convincingly that the author's humanism was active and not merely a sentimental hobby. The Webbs' minority report caught Mr. Ollivant in a sympathetic hour, and confirmed him as a sober-going collectivist. After a trip to India he settled for a

Rachel Ollivant.

Mr. and Mrs. Ollivant's daughter. From a photograph taken in Switzerland.

time among the dockyards and tan-pits of Bermondsey in charge of a care committee; this term was followed by sojourns in Fulham and Hammersmith for the sake of work upon adult schools, working-men's clubs, and the crusade against unemployment. He wrote "The Royal Road" (1912), a novel which champions a Cockney labourer cast among the river-edge tanneries, and rounds off a chequered career by means of a moving reconciliation with the universal scheme of things. A monodrama of everyday heroism below the poverty line, it veils a mighty benevolence under the rags of realism; and some who know the East End through and through have classed it as the most understanding study ever written upon the lives of London's masses. You will find this strenuous crusader phase set out in certain fugitive pamphlets of Mr. Ollivant's which have been too soon forgotten, but best of all, perhaps, in "The Next Step." This new essay on reconstruction comes from a man who fought hard for peace before the war, and strove for the Allies when the war was on. It insists that the policing of the world is a nobler and more effectual means of righting things than any resort to war. Some of us may harbour practical doubts, and prefer to keep our powder dry, but we cannot resist the cogency of this plea for sober wisdom and restraint in the ruling of the commonwealth of nations.

Marriage and fatherhood had come by this time to a man who had earned, if any man did ever, his full arrears of happiness. With the outbreak of war came an invitation to America to help in dramatising his first book, and he wrote for the *Transcript* and the *Atlantic Monthly* a series of articles and stories describing England and Europe under the cloud, which did sterling work in educating the West to the pitch of duty and action. But the soul soon wore the body down again. Volunteering and hard work shattered him physically, and

Alfred Ollivant.

From a photograph taken in December, 1919.

Mr. Ollivant went back to his "mattress grave." There he has been a prisoner ever since. Happily he had proved that nothing could break his spirit. In "Boy Woodburn" (1918) he has returned to the full-bosomed bounty of the downlands, and he has now improved on all he ever wrote, by his new novel, "Two Men." Reviewers will probably say that Ruth is another Tess, crowned with a happy ending; but they will find it hard to name any parallel to the third of the Caspars, a great-hearted man of the soil who disdains success, and wins upon the reader by a splendid manliness. Except for a couple of army chapters in India, the story lives and moves and has its being between the weald of Sussex and the sea, and it translates the "dim blue goodness" of it all into natural character and speech and action.

Mr. Ollivant's books, especially this last one, are the treble distillation of a great soul tried in the fires of patience, but I doubt if the reader has ever learned as much from any of his writings. Now that they have entered on what is practically a collected and complete edition, with the benefit of ripe revision, he looks like coming by his own wherever a deep and broad humanity finds a voice in sound English, and a hearing among discerning men. Many critics of eminence will now proceed to discover him who have somehow ignored him hitherto, but their praise will be little worth if they fail to add that he has done what only the greatest have done in literature. The appeal of his life is surely as vivid as anything he has ever written, yet he has scorned to ring himself into fame by jangling a sickroom bell. That is the worst and the commonest kind of pathetic fallacy. He has left his blackest thoughts in the inkpot, in order to give the world his best. And reticence is so scarce a virtue nowadays that it seems to me the point should not be lost.

THE BOOKMAN PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

FEBRUARY, 1920.

Answers to these competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing the name and address of the sender) should be forwarded not later than the 14th of the month to

"The Prize Page," THE BOOKMAN, Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., Warwick Square, E.C.4.

Colonial and foreign readers please note that Competitions II., IV. and V. are the same each month, and that for the next two months the first prize will be for the best original lyric.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—*Competitors must please keep copies of their verses; the Editor cannot undertake to return them.*

I.—A PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA is offered for the best *original* lyric.

II.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best quotation from English verse applicable to any review or the name of any author or book appearing in this number of THE BOOKMAN. Preference will be given to quotations of a humorous nature.

III.—A PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS will be given for the best suggestion of a new name to be given to the modern domestic servant.

IV.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best review, in not more than one hundred words, of any recently published book. Competitors should give the names of Authors and Publishers at head of review.

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V.—A copy of THE BOOKMAN will be sent *post free* for *twelve months* to the sender of the best suggestion for THE BOOKMAN Competitions. The Editor reserves the right to use any suggestion submitted.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS FOR JANUARY.

I.—The Prize of ONE GUINEA for the best original lyric is awarded to Geoffrey Dearmer, of Depot Barracks, York, for the following:

THE DRUNKARD.

Within me burned the Master-Poet's flame
Of all Life's purpose conscious nor apart,
And Beauty like a bride awaited came
And lived within my heart.

I knew all joy and knowledge, every word
I joined to word in love, and every hour
Taught me to love and treasure every bird
And beast, and fearless flower.

Worthy of light my limbs, and mine the joy
Of wrestlers oiled, wary of eye and hand,
And limbs of rhythmic splendour, as a boy
In scudding foam and sand

Surf-marbled, and soft effervescing seas,
And pools grown suddenly deep 'neath skies of wine,
Most blessed joys most felt, Ah! joys were these
Most felt, and most divine!

Then slowly and too slow for shame, a lust
Like syrens lured me where the ways are cold,
Cold as hard eyes and masks of rouge and rust
And bodies bought for gold.

Slowly the splendours faded, slowly passed
The long, long wonder and awoken might
Of Song, the gift of God, until at last
My life was void of light.

And now I stagger down, and down, and down,
In awful solitude and stifling air;
To me the lamps are lightless, and the town
Is silent everywhere.

Still in the mart of books I scrutinise
My work enthralled, line on triumphant line,
I stand beside and watch the glowing eyes
That never glance at mine.

Unrecognised, alone, I watch and hear
My name from eager mouth to mouth, and I
Start sobered if men swerve from me and sneer
And staring, pass me by.

Live I no longer, Master, shall the sneer
And shrug of little men rob me of this?
Have I not wrung from hardened eyes, a tear,
From hardened lips, a kiss?

Surely my soul, however dark my fate,
Has been the seed-bed of thy spoken word,
In others dumb, in me articulate,
My Master, and my Lord?

We also select for printing:

A FLIGHT OF BIRDS.

If there should come a flock of birds
Flying at dusk your garden through,
With wings of fire and silver wings—
Be sure they are my thoughts of you.

And they shall crown you with the touch
Of kisses spent upon your hair,
And the soft rapture of their wings
Shall beat like music on the air.

For those with feathers made of gold
Are all my songs about your face,
And he with sapphire wings is one
Swift thought upon your body's grace—
Yet are they wild and wandering birds
That have no sure abiding-place.

(But if there should be one or two
Whose wings are silver tipped with blue—
Ah, call them home against your heart,
Because they are my prayers of you.)

(Rachel Bates, "The Orchard," Victoria Road, Great Crosby, near Liverpool.)

THE ONES THAT ARE NOT NEAR.

In Lovers' Lane, when stars are few and clear,
Just round the sudden corners where I tread,
I hear
The voices of the ones that are not near—
The voices of the dead.

Quite low I seem to hear them whispering.
And by the gate, the blackbirds' favoured spot,
They sing. . . .
And when I halt, they cease—as listening
For news that I bring not.

And when my footfall sounds again, they seem
With sighs to trouble the dark trees around;
Nor dream.
And though I listen hereafter, only the stream
Tells night where song is found.

(Cyril G. Taylor, 35, Castle Street, Edinburgh.)

We also select for special commendation the lyrics sent by: L. N. (London, S.W.), Barbara E. Todd (Doncaster), George Fletcher (Jarrow-on-Tyne), May Herschel Clarke (Woolwich), Helen K. Watts (Brighton), H. L. Groom (Palmer's Green), Gertrude Gleeson (Leyton), Margaret Douglas (Scarborough), Ada M. Hudson (Highgate), Doris Amy Ibbotson (Newport, I.O.W.), Rev. Edwin C. Lansdown (Eastbourne), Lucy Malleson (London, W.), J. A. Bellchambers (London, N.), John R. Doubleday (Streatham), Freda Isobel Noble (London, E.), L. M. Priest (Norwich), Herbert Elvin (Westcliff-on-Sea), Wilfred W. Kershaw (Southport), Ruth Underwood (Ealing), Lilian Holmes (Faversham), F. O. Call (Lennoxville, Canada), Evelina Ida San Garde (Accrington), Margaret K. McEvoy (Cricklewood), Cyril Bertram; Nancy Pollock (Glasgow), Violet Walker (Whitehaven), Geoffrey H. Wells (Cardiff), Margaret Brown (Calne), A. Violet Gandy (Bath), Marguerite S. Goode (West Croydon), "Sinbad" (Scarborough), Winifred Tasker (Llandudno), Ivan Adair (Dublin), Beatrice Skilton (Forest Gate), Lettie Cole (Pontrilas), Winifred Watson (Ilfracombe), Doris Berkhout (Sandown), R. K. Mundy (Bournemouth), A. E.; Ruth Bevan (Bude), Mrs. Charles Kirk (South Kensington).

II.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best quotation is awarded to Winifred Watson, of 10, Springfield Road, Ilfracombe, for the following:

THE PEACE IN THE MAKING. By H. WILSON HARRIS. (Swarthmore Press.)

"Father heard the children scream,
Went and took them to the stream,
Saying, as he drowned the third,
'Children should be seen, *not* heard.'"

HARRY GRAHAM, *Ruthless Rhymes for Heartless Homes.*

We also select for printing:

LESSONS IN VERSE CRAFT. By S. Gertrude Ford. (Daniel.)

"I'll teach you how to sing a clearer carol."
Charles Kingsley, *A Farewell.*

(H. W. Barnsdale, 23, West Parade, Lincoln.)

THE MAN'S STORY. By H. B. Somerville. (Hutchinson.)

"My dear, I was the first who came away."
Byron, *Don Juan, Canto I., Stanza* 141.

(Ernest A. Fuller, 10, The Circus, Greenwich, S.E.10.)

THE SUBSTANCE OF A DREAM. By F. W. Bain. (Methuen.)

"Porridge and apples,
Mince, muffins and mutton,
Jam, junket, jumbles."
Walter de la Mare, *Peacock Pie.*

(Minna Browning, Strathcona, St. John's, Cheltenham.)

A WOMAN ALONE. By Mrs. W. K. Clifford.

"Where art thou, Adam?"
Milton, *Paradise Lost, Book X.*

(Miss Blackett, 9, Florence Terrace, Falmouth.)

AN ENGLISH COURSE FOR SCHOOLS. By S. P. B. Mais. (Grant Richards.)

"Half a pound of twopenny rice,
Half a pound of treacle."
Old Rhyme.

(Rev. Edwin C. Lansdown, 33, Hartfield Road, Eastbourne.)

LIFE LAID BARE. (Title of a Review.)

"What makes all doctrines plain and clear?
About two hundred pounds a year.
And that which was proved true before
Prove false again? Two hundred more."
Butler, *Hudibras.*

(Irene Lalonde, 14, Forester Road, Bath.)

III.—The Prize of Three New Books for the best answer to the question: If you had Aladdin's Lamp what is the first wish you would gratify? is awarded to Miss K. Lewis, of Elmsdale, High Oakham Road, Mansfield, Notts, for the following:

Should Aladdin's wonderful lamp come into my hands, my first command to the Genii would be, not the building of a palace for a king's daughter, but the erection, all over this land, of thousands of houses, fit to be the dwellings of the men who gave us Peace. Of all shapes, sizes and colours, they should spring out of the brown earth like mushrooms, in a single night; dream houses, come true; each one awaiting its rightful owner, ready to imprison for him all the happy hours, to become that dearest spot in the world—"Home."

This Competition has brought an unusually large number of replies, and it is significant that the most popular wish is for vast quantities of houses; other common wishes are for universal happiness; to end all labour unrest; and the favourite personal wish is to be a successful writer. We specially commend the replies by Daisy Underwood (Ealing), Rev. G. Bradley Jones (Bournemouth), Margaret Fountain (Huntingdon), Mrs. Guy Branson (Birmingham), E. W. (Dublin), George Barnett (Forest Hill), H. Dalton Vasey (London, E.), Mary J. Machar (Castle Eden), Alfred J. West (Cardiff), S. Anderson (Manchester), Ruth Bevan (Bude), Gwendolen Leijonhufvud (Bournemouth).

IV.—The Prize of Half a Guinea for the best review is awarded to M. K. Boothby, of 105, Scalby Road, Scarborough, for the following:

STAR OF INDIA. By Alice Perrin. (Cassell.)

In "Star of India" we are introduced to the heroine, Stella, as an inexperienced girl surrounded by an atmosphere of early-Victorian "stuffiness." The call of the East is in her blood, and early in the narrative she is released from her life of boredom by marriage with a certain Colonel Crayfield, many years her senior. Later, in India, when Stella falls in love with another and younger man, complications arise. The author is thoroughly familiar with life in a remote station; she has no social or moral axe to grind, and the book is readable throughout having the advantage of a not unnaturally happy ending.

We also select for printing:

THE CLANKING OF CHAINS. By B. MacNamara. (Maunsel.)

A picture of Irish political life from pre-war days to the present as reflected in a Midland village. The central figure is an humble shop-assistant sincerely believing in the traditional nationalism of his forbears—his sufferings at the hands of the mere politicians is the theme. The novel is a strong one but rather as the study of a pool than of the flowing river of a country's life, nor are we convinced there is anywhere a village with only one just man and so much petty villainy. Surely the most stagnant waters will reflect some beauty if only that of the ever-changing skies.

(Francis J. Kelly, 16, St. Joseph's Avenue, Drumcondra, Dublin.)

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: THE PRACTICAL MYSTIC. By Francis Grierson. (John Lane.)

To the dominant part which religious mysticism played in the life of America's greatest statesman this slim volume is devoted. It is the work of an enthusiast who possesses the ability to transmit his enthusiasm to the reader, and draw him almost unconsciously towards the man who has been the subject of so much controversy—the man who saved America almost in spite of herself. It is a fascinating little book and gives a brief but clear insight into the principles and ideas which governed the life and work of Lincoln.

(Ethel Mulvany, 21, Drury Street, Dublin.)

A MUSE AT SEA. By E. Hilton Young. (Sidgwick & Jackson.)

To the short, but earnest, roll of seamen-poets led by Admiral Hopwood, "Etienne," and a few others, we must now add the name of Mr. Young, whose work earns for him his niche. His sea-pictures are limned with a fine sense of poetry, but fail to convey always the vastness of the water-wastes with which they deal. There is no flaw in his seamanship and his knowledge of sea-lore alone would make his poetry worth while. The rugged and stalwart simplicity of his emotions greatly add to the solemn grandeur of many of his themes.

(W. Curran Reedy, 109, Hampton Road, Forest Gate, Essex.)

We specially commend the reviews by Gordon Fletcher (Erdington), Angela Cave (Boscombe), Florence G. Fidler (London, W.), Eileen M. Bradbury (Sheffield), Jessie Jackson (Beverley), Mrs. Beatrice Mainwaring (Whitmore), B. Noel Saxelby (Manchester), Mrs. Sybilla Kirkland Vesey (Glenfarg), A. O. S. (Liverpool), J. A. Jenkins (Liverpool), W. Swayne Little (Dublin), K. E. Douglas (Milford), Mrs. Maude R. Fleeson (Manchester), F. Webster (Walworth), Margaret Douglas (Scarborough), Lilias Close (Cookstown), V. K. Horner (Wymondham), Geoffrey Mead (London, W.C.), "Buxtona" (Buxton), A. F. Pearson (Halifax), "Lavender Resarf" (London, W.), M. Twitchett (Sunderland), Albert Munn (Resolven), Eve Casey (London, W.C.), C. C. Underwood (Ealing).

V.—The Prize of One Year's subscription to The Bookman is awarded to Maud Montagu Bruce, Airth, Sunningdale, Berks.

XUM

PATRICK MACGILL, "THE NAVVY POET."

BY DAVID HODGE.

IN a sense it is unfortunate that Patrick MacGill should still have attached to him the label "the navvy poet," for he has progressed far on the literary highway since the days when his writings were regarded as remarkable in themselves but more so on account of the fact that they were the work of a self-taught Irish stripling who had left his native Donegal to work as a navvy in Scotland. In another sense the retention of the label is fitting, because he was among the first to make vocal that little understood class—the Irish navvies—who toil unregarded at our railways, docks and roads, and at the beginning of his writing career it was in verse that he did this service to his colleagues of the pick and shovel. That was only ten or twelve years ago, when MacGill was working as a member of a repair gang on the Caledonian Railway between Greenock and Wemyss Bay. At that time—with characteristic enterprise—he resorted to the methods of the early poets and did his own distribution, leaving his little "Gleanings from a Navvy's Scrapbook" at back doors one evening and calling back later in the week for sixpence if the book had happened to meet some one who wished to buy it. A bright-eyed lad with black curly hair and a melodious and sympathetic voice, his personality excited almost as much interest as his writings, and to this day—when he approaches his thirtieth year and has to his credit a long list of books in prose and verse and an established reputation among contemporary poets and novelists—public curiosity remains keen as to how a youth with little or no educational advantages, and with all the disadvantages that a navvy's life may be expected to place in the way of literary development, succeeded in achieving his present eminence. It may be said that greater writers were more severely handicapped by their early environment and early life, and the cases of Dickens and Burns may be cited. The boy Dickens had disabilities almost as serious as those of MacGill, but Burns had not, thanks to his father, from whom he received a sound education and every encouragement to study.

Photo by Foulsham & Banfield. **Patrick MacGill.**

Naturally, many myths surround MacGill's beginnings. It is told, for instance, without truth, that he first took to writing verse through having picked from the permanent way on which he was at work in the Glasgow neighbourhood, "Barrack-Room Ballads," dropped from a passing train. More accurate is the tale that MacGill was interested in a poem on a margarine-wrapper at Kinlochleven, and that, moved to emulation by what he had read, he wrote some lines which he sent to a Glasgow evening newspaper, which not only printed them but paid for them. Facts are that he was born at Glenties, County Donegal, of poor peasant parents, attended the national school of his village, but left at the age of ten and went, when twelve, to work as a labourer in the Irish Midlands. Later he worked in Scotland as a railway platelayer and as navvy at the great waterworks at Kinlochleven, from which he returned to the railway. All the time he had been endeavouring to educate himself. He joined circulating libraries, and studied in particular Montaigne, Carlyle, Victor Hugo, Bret Harte and Rudyard Kipling. The second-hand bookshops of the cities knew him well, but at these establishments he had to go cautiously, the booksellers often insisting that he must purchase books he had fingered, so grimy were his navvy hands. To a London newspaper he sent an article on navvy life. "Post that man his railway fare, and bring him south," said the editor, much impressed by the contribution. MacGill duly presented himself in Fleet Street, where the corduroys of the raw-green navvy were at once superseded by less unconventional Fleet Street attire, and he was instructed to write half a column on the latest fashions in men's neckties and socks. He tried to do so, but failed—which is not surprising, the task to which he was put being just as easy for him as the writing of an essay on bimetallism or George Meredith would be to a Sandwich Islander. MacGill was not a Fleet Street success: not even an Irish Barrie can picture him as a disciple of Rob Angus and Noble Simms. Later, he was taken in hand by Canon Dalton, through whose influence the young Irishman got congenial work among the manuscripts at Windsor Castle, where he might have been to this day if his novels had not encouraged him to devote himself exclusively to letters. In August, 1914, he joined the Army, and as a private in the London Irish he fought till wounded at Loos and invalided out. He had many offers of a commission, but he preferred to remain in the ranks, where he felt that he could best study the fighting man. Returning to England, he was employed in the War Office Propaganda Department, where written work had to be turned out whether the spirit moved him or not. The effect was not wholly beneficial; but he has now

Photo by Foulsham & Banfield. **Mrs. Patrick MacGill.**

completely returned to himself, as witness his new novel, "Maureen."

MacGill has written many noteworthy works—all highly charged with the influence of a masterful personality—but his most important books remain "Children of the Dead End" and "The Rat Pit." Each is autobiographical to a large extent, and it is in describing what he has actually seen and felt that MacGill—like the majority of authors—is at his best. With imagination he is not always—even in his verse—completely successful, and it is the easiest thing in the world to determine which parts of his books are based on actual experience and which on hearsay or invention. Realism is the key-note of "Children of the Dead End" and "The Rat Pit"—which are indeed one book, both telling the story of Dermod Flynn and Norah Ryan, who come from Ireland as mere children to take part in the arduous and miserably-paid work of potato-digging in Scotland. MacGill writes with first-hand knowledge of this work, but the appalling particulars he gives as to how the workers live and are housed have been challenged. He describes the sleeping quarters of the decent Irish folk as "an evil-smelling byre, the roof of which was covered with cobwebs, the floor with dung. On both sides of the sink, which ran up the middle, was a row of stalls, each stall containing two iron stanchions to which chains for tying cattle were fixed." A Government report gives even a more fœtid description of such accommodation as was provided for these Irish toilers within recent years. But still more amazing to the uninformed must appear MacGill's accounts of Glasgow's underworld. It is an underworld of which even an overwhelming majority of the citizens of that city had no knowledge; but it existed, and there is no reason to believe that it does not exist to-day. The back "lands" are still there, the barefooted harlots, the squalid public-houses, the dust-heap pickers, the doss-houses, the sweating, and the churches that have as neighbours dens of iniquity and vice. Regarding all these we are not spared in the pages of MacGill. It is with Zolaesque vigour and relentlessness that he tells of these and of the making of the great aluminium works at Kinlochleven, an undertaking that drew navvies from all parts of Britain and Ireland to form a community that would not have seemed incongruous at Ballarat or the Klondyke in their early days. At Kinlochleven, MacGill worked, and wrote, and fought. His descriptions of fights are lyrics of the ring—not the ring as we have it in London to-day, but the ring of the olden times when men fought with bare fists for the sport of the thing and not for pots of gold. While Kinlochleven was in the making, the outside public had no knowledge of the mighty work in progress, and they would have remained ignorant as to what the making of it meant had not the rough, fighting, card-playing, blaspheming navvies had among them the author of "Children of the Dead End." There were no women at Kinlochleven. The author writes: "Since I came to Kinlochleven I had not looked on a woman, and the thoughts of womankind had almost gone from my mind. With the rest of the men it was the same. The sexual instinct was almost dead within them. Women were merely dreams of long ago." At another point he describes navvies as a class of men who are remarkably pure. No women hang about their lodging-houses, and they do not go in quest of women. . . . "Children of the Dead End" and "The Rat Pit" are etched with a very sure hand, and superfluous

Photo by Foulsham & Banfield. **Patrick MacGill.**

lines are rare. Pictures abound. This, for instance, of Kinlochleven:

"The winter was at hand. When the night drew near a great weariness came over the face of the sun as it sank down behind the hills which had seen a million sunsets. . . . A strange silence settled on the lonely places. Nature waited breathless on the threshold of some great event, holding her hundred winds suspended in a fragile leash. The heather-bells hung motionless on their stems, the torrents dropped silently as smoke from the scarred edges of the desolate ravines, but in this silence there lay a menace; in its supreme poise was its threat of coming danger. The crash of our hammers was an outrage, and the exploding dynamite a sacrilege against tired nature."

Photo by Foulsham & Banfield. **Mr. and Mrs. Patrick MacGill.**

As a poet MacGill has an easy command of rhythm as well as a true poetic sense, and it is as a poet that some of his admirers and ablest critics consider that he will leave his most enduring m rk. Ten years ago he suffered from his label: in their surprise that a navvy could write verse, the critics were apt to omit to apply their customary standards. Still, nascent genius was detected; and as time went on MacGill produced verse that, the critics saw, was good, even when judged by standards that were high. It is said that he copied Kipling. Of course he did—who among our youthful poets of twelve years ago did not? He copied Kipling, but the MacGill element in the copies was the stronger and the more intimate, as in "Padding It To Ballachulish":

"Jackson has need of navvies, navvies who understand
The graft of the offside reaches, to labour where God has banned,
Men of the sign of the moleskin who swear by the soulless pit,
Men who are eager for money and ready in spending it;
Bluchers and velvet waistcoats, and kneestraps below the knees—
The great unwashed of the model—Jackson has need of these!"

In contrast, there are his sad lines about his beloved Ireland, among them:

"I'm going back to Glenties when the harvest fields are brown,
And the autumn sunset lingers on my little Irish town;
When the gossamer is shining where the moorland blossoms blow,
I'll take the road across the hills I tramped so long ago—
'Tis far I am beyond the seas, but yearning voices call,
'Will you not come back to Glenties and your wave-washed Donegal?'"

War gave MacGill inspiration for much of his most moving verse, including "La Bassée Road," "Marching," "After Loos," "A.D. 1916," and "Death and the Fairies."

"Maureen" has Ireland for scene; and just now, of all times, it is a book for Englishmen to read, for it shows peasant Ireland as an Irishman sees it to-day, with British troops in occupation and Sinn Fein in the ascendant among the political parties. MacGill takes no political side; but his heroine says: "Ireland hasn't her rights. They were taken from her hundreds of years ago by England, and ever since that time she has been crushed down"—and one imagines that the sentiment would not be disclaimed by the author. He is anti-clerical, though he portrays many a noble priest; and his affection for his native land does not lead him to paint his compatriots, men or women, as saints.

Settled now in Hendon, with Glasgow's slums and railways and the blastings and fights of Kinlochleven only a vivid memory, MacGill is the centre of a literary household. His wife also is a novelist. She writes with grace and understanding of youth, and that she has the genuine qualities of a story-teller is exemplified by her latest work, "Whom God Hath Chosen."

New Books.

A SEER AT WORK.*

Admirers of Mr. Benchara Branford maintain that his "Janus and Vesta" (1916) contains between fifty and sixty predictions, and that of these about half have been already verified, while not a single one out of the whole has been falsified. His friends tell us that it is nearly a generation ago that as a young man he made a forecast of the present world-crisis. Among the more prominent of the verified forecasts of the "Janus" book are the downfall of the Kaiser, the revolution that followed, the impossibility of a German naval hegemony, the passing of Mohammedan hegemony from Turcoman to Semitic races, and the big banking combines. It becomes us then to walk warily in dealing with a writer of this calibre, when he passes from the general to the particular and expands some of his seminal ideas, as he does in the volume before us.

Mr. Branford is not alone in noting the divided allegiance that has been introduced into social life by the spirit that underlies syndicalism. We have all observed the antagonism that has arisen between the two patriotisms. Loyalty is being divided between the claims of the country on the one hand and the claims of class or occupation on the other. But Mr. Branford does not rest content with contemplating the increasing cleavage: he sets about finding remedies. We are becoming cosmopolitans by the sheer force of circumstances, but the claims of race,

* "A New Chapter in the Science of Government." By Benchara Branford. 5s. net. (Chatto & Windus.)

country, province, city, parish, cannot be neglected with impunity. But why should the two loyalties clash with one another? Cannot they be so directed as to work harmoniously towards the common good? Each is essential to the full and free development of modern society. They oppose one another only in the sense in which the warp and weft oppose one another: they move in different directions, but lead to a result in which each has an equal share. With his well-known love of suggestive symbolism, our seer tells us that the warp of society is geographical, while the weft is occupational. His next step is to suggest the lines along which the two forces, regionalism and occupationalism, may be conducted so as to produce the desired result; and he finds to his hand the two Houses of Parliament waiting to be utilised. He has the ingenious conception that the House of Lords has been in the past the custodian of the interests of the citizens as producers, while to the House of Commons fell the part of conserving their interests as consumers. The generalisation is a daring one, but there is much to be said for it. With wrung withers we may be driven to confess that at any rate the conception is worth considering, since we are in desperate straits to find some intelligible policy to meet our present financial difficulties.

Mr. Branford holds steadily on his course by proposing to reconstruct Parliament so that the Upper House shall be filled with members chosen on the basis of occupation, while the roll of the Lower House shall be filled by members chosen on a geographical basis. Some readers may object to the fanciful argument of the *gilded* chamber being the natural home of the *guild* interests, but to do Mr. Branford justice he does not press considerations of this kind as real arguments, though his poetic mind cannot help noting them. His love of verbal effects is marked, and he is fond of such quips as "a progressive balance and a balanced progress." But whenever he encounters a real difficulty he faces it fairly and discards all verbal adornments. Thus in his upper, or occupational chamber, he foresees trouble in the conflict between capital and labour. Here he seeks reconciliation in the fact that every citizen is necessarily both capitalist and labourer, and that both interests will be justly treated in a house where employers and employed meet on equal terms.

Out of this difficulty arises the need for a revised conception of the nature of labour. Those who are worried by the rather ridiculous distinction at present drawn between producers and non-producers, will rejoice in the definition, "'*Produce*' *is the result of any useful activity*; and any citizen who *creates* 'produce' is truly a '*labourer*.'" It is by a combination of human, organic and mechanical activities that man is able to produce what our author calls "utilities."

The ground is thus cleared for the interaction between the two houses, each working out the best lines of advancement for the interests committed to it. By organised series of meetings in common session the two houses will secure that there shall be that amount of compromise that is necessary to promote the reconciliation of sectional oppositions in the higher unity of the general well-being. It all sounds too good to be true, and critics who like to call themselves hard-headed will have something to say about Mr. Branford's analogies and trilogies and complex interpretations. But it may fairly be pointed out to them that we have here at least a constructive scheme, and one based, after all, on the facts of the case. It is not without significance that we find the text of the book preceded by twenty-seven pages of press extracts embodying representative contemporary polito-economic views. The book is eminently fair, and even pessimists should welcome a prophet who has proved his capacity, and has faith that his present predictions will be justified as those in "Janus and Vesta" have been so far. The forecasts at the end of Chapter XVI. of "Janus" remain still to be realised, but Mr. Branford has taken the best means of securing their fulfilment by the practical guidance he has given in the present volume.

JOHN ADAMS.

THE ENGLISH AND AMERICAN MUSE.*

Every one has praised Mr. John Masefield's latest poem, and by an accident the present review bears its tribute somewhat tardily to qualities which every lover of poetry must eagerly recognise. "Reynard the Fox" is the record of a day's hunting from dawn to dusk, rich in clear-cut cameos of English life and character. It is impossible to avoid the reflection that, in the opening passages, Mr. Masefield has had in his mind the Prologue to Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales." The long gallery of British portraiture which he presents could have no other exemplar. We start with the old tavern front, and the ostlers busy at their work of preparation:

> "Rubbing fox-flecks out of stirrups,
> Dumbing buckles of their chirrups
> By the touch of oily feathers."

Mr. Masefield has the Kipling taste for technicalities:

> "The savour
> Of saddle-paste and polish spirit
> Which put the gleam on flap and tirrit."

How many readers, one wonders, could define "a tirrit." No matter. These unfamiliar rhymes lend a zest to the picture.

And then the company begins to arrive, quick with all the variety of the country-side, old men and young, matrons and maids, with the breeze striking colour out of their cheeks, and their eyes full of the morning sunlight. It is an easy criticism that the street is overcrowded; and indeed only a few of the figures linger in the memory. Still, one can always refer to the text for refreshment. And the village gossip adds piquancy to the description:

> "Jane Selbie said to Ellen Tranter,
> 'A lot on 'em come doggin' 'ant her?'
> 'A lot on 'em,' said Ellen. 'Look,
> There'm Mr. Gaunt of Water's Hook.
> They say he . . . ' (*whispered*). 'Law!' said Jane.
> Gaunt flung his heel across the mane,
> And slithered from his horse and stamped.
> 'Boots tight,' he said. 'My feet are cramped.'"

By degrees the square fills, and the hunt moves off to covert. And then the measure quickens, and the reader is running with the fox:

> "The rooks rose raving to curse him raw,
> He snarled a sneer at their swoop and caw.
> Then on, then on, down a half-ploughed field
> Where a ship-like plough drove glitter-keeled,
> With a bay horse near and a white horse leading,
> And a man saying 'Look,' and the red earth bleeding."

It is a long run, till the victim's courage begins to yield:

> "And here, as he ran to the huntsman's yelling,
> The fox first felt that the pace was telling;
> His body and lungs seemed all grown old,
> His legs less certain, his heart less bold."

No poet worthy of his sack could let so gallant a fellow die before our eyes. Luckily a terrier turns the scent, and then another fox is followed and killed after a short run. Our hero of the day's companionship is safe in his lair, after perilous straits before familiar earth stopped with stakes:

> "Then the moon came quiet and flooded full
> Light and beauty on clouds like wool,
> On a feasted fox at rest from hunting,
> In the beechwood grey where the brocks were grunting."

There are some 3,000 lines of this fresh, vigorous, open-air stuff, and it says much for the poet's art that the spirit of it never falters for a moment. Whether masters of hounds read poetry or not it is difficult to say, but one need not hunt with the Pytchley to realise the full flavour and jolly, human quality of Mr. Masefield's muse.

* "Reynard the Fox." By John Masefield. 5s. net. (Heinemann.)—"Rosalys, and Other Poems." By Gerald Cumberland. 3s. 6d. net. (Grant Richards.)—"General William Booth Enters Into Heaven." By Nicholas Vachel Lindsay. 5s. net. (Chatto & Windus.)

Mr. Gerald Cumberland's poetry is of a more cloistered type; it has affinities with the Rhymers' Club of a quarter of a century ago. White bodies, rosy kisses, the lights of Paris, dalliance and dream—such are the materials of his melodious verse. He watches the bathers:

"Upturn'd to heaven, a girl
Floats very near;
Twin breasts of glossy pearl
Make islands here."

The seasons are a sort of symbolic pageantry of love:

"She comes with crocus blooms, with daffodils;
She stays when lilac floats upon the sight.
In rose-time she is queening it all day,
And singing in her slumber half the night.
My arms are ever open for her sake,
And, taking her, I give myself, and lose
The summer in a dream of joys, and make
My night mysterious with the love she breathes."

There is genuine passion in Mr. Cumberland's verse; his imagery is fervid and copious; he has vision and imagination. The fact that he hunts old trails should not detract from the grace of his fancy and the warm energy of his expression.

But what is to be said of Mr. Nicholas Vachel Lindsay? The trails which he hunts are certainly not old; they are almost distractingly new. He appears under the approbation of Mr. Robert Nichols, who reports the praise of Mr. W. B. Yeats ("this poem has an earnest simplicity, a strange beauty") and of Mr. John Masefield ("He is the best American poet"). Testimony, like this, from poets of such different methods, would compel attention, even if Mr. Lindsay did not compel it for himself. But he does. He has a fine, vigorous, crude music, like the clashing of cymbals and the whistling of flutes. Mr. Nichols reports that the poet travels America, reciting his poems. "His head is slightly tilted back, the nostrils extended, the eyes closed. During the delivery—which is rapid and even, changing in pace, rhythm and volume, but never in tone, his arms, especially the hands, gesture slightly."

And the poet himself adds:

"It is the hope of the writer that after two or three readings each line will suggest its own separate touch of melody to the reader who has become accustomed to the cadences. Let him read what he likes to read, and sing what he likes to sing."

This is rather an exigent programme, and we turn with hesitation to the first piece, "General William Booth Enters Into Heaven," which is "to be sung to the tune of the 'The Blood of the Lamb' with instrumental accompaniment":

"Booth led boldly with his big brass drum—
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)
The Saints smiled gravely and they said: 'He's come'
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)
Walking lepers followed, rank on rank,
Lurching bravoes from the ditches dank,
Drabs from the alleyways and drug-fiends pale—
Minds still passion-ridden, soul-powers frail—
Vermin-eaten saints with mouldy breath,
Unwashed legions with the wages of Death—
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)"

This seems strong meat for powerful digestions, and realising that its flavour is controlled by the theme, we seek refuge in a gentler atmosphere:

"Star of my heart, I follow from afar.
Sweet Love on high, lead on where shepherds are.
Where Time is not, and only dreamers are.
Star from of old, the Magi-Kings are dead
And a foolish Saxon seeks the manger-bed.
O lead me to Jehovah's child
Across this dreamland lone and wild,
Then will I speak this prayer unsaid,
And kiss his little haloed head—
'My star and I, we love thee, little child.'"

A closer study suggests that Mr. Vachel Lindsay's poetry is all of this somewhat perfervid order. It glows with a sort of undisciplined fervour; it wells up with turgid words which catch the fancy; but, when you come to analyse it, the meaning dwindles into a disconcerting likeness to Scrooge's bed-post:

"The genius of the lotos
Shall heal earth's too-much fret.
The rose, in blinding glory,
Shall waken Asia yet.
Hail to their loves, ye peoples!
Behold, a world-wind blows,
That aids the ivory lotos
To wed the red, red rose."

Of such fancies many ballads have been wrought in many years. But poetry is something more interpretative than this. Much American verse, we know, is bad; but we can hardly credit Mr. Masefield when he says that this is America's best.

ARTHUR WAUGH.

GEORGIAN POETRY.

This is the day of coteries in literature. Coteries lead to log-rolling and log-rolling leads to self-satisfaction, smugness and contentment with one's achievement when one has only attained the second-rate.

Poets seem nowadays to join trade unions of their own: they seldom attempt to claim a hearing for themselves as individuals, they only dare to face the public in groups and under the protection of their admiring fellows. They write poems in praise of each other, and hope that the public will accept them at their own very high valuation.

It has been "E. M.'s" distinctive merit that he has for years avoided groups in his excellent series of "Georgian Poetry": he has selected his poets because he himself approved them, and arbitrarily he banishes and arbitrarily he welcomes. When therefore we have to find fault we have to blame "E. M.," and not the group he stands for.

In his latest volume* we find ourselves more inclined to adverse criticism than we did over any of the earlier volumes. There are several poems which ought never to have been included. It is absurd to pretend that we can produce two hundred pages of real poetry every two years.

These Georgians collectively give one the impression of vagueness, their emotions are anæmic, their knowledge of nature and men inaccurate, their music harsh or completely absent; they have but little sense of beauty and none of colour; they waste all their energies on metrical experiments and leave none for their interpretation of life; they certainly never speak from the heart to the heart, poetry is not for them the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds, they never trouble the waters of the spirit, they deny completely by their results the Miltonic definition of "thoughts that voluntary move harmonious numbers." Their numbers are seldom harmonious and they rarely express any thought. It is, in fact, impossible to arrive at any definition of what they mean by poetry.

It is pleasant to turn to the few who redeem the volume and pass over the rest in silence.

Francis Brett Young, who is one of the most able of the younger novelists, in his "Song" gives us by far the loveliest lyric in the book:

"Why have you stolen my delight
In all the golden shows of spring,
When every cherry-tree is white
And in the limes the thrushes sing,

"O fickler than the April day,
O brighter than the golden broom,
O blither than the thrushes' lay,
O whiter than the cherry-bloom,

"O sweeter than all things that blow . . .
Why have you only left for me
The broom, the cherry's crown of snow,
And thrushes in the linden-tree?"

* "Georgian Poetry, 1918–1919." 6s. net. (Poetry Bookshop.)

The simplicity that marks all true poetry is evident here as it is in all that W. H. Davies writes, whose epitaph is worthy of its author:

"The only things that knew me well
Were children, dogs, and girls that fell;
I bought poor children cakes and sweets,
Dogs heard my voice and danced the streets;
And, gentle to a fallen lass,
I made her weep for what she was.
Good men and women know not me,
Nor love nor hate the mystery."

It is interesting to compare this with a parallel poem by Walter de la Mare, sweetest of singers:

"Look thy last on all things lovely,
Every hour. Let no night
Seal thy sense in deathly slumber
Till to delight
Thou have paid thy utmost blessing;
Since that all things thou wouldst praise
Beauty took from those who loved them
In other days."

No one would question the true poetic touch here.

For colour we give the palm to W. W. Gibson:

"As a blue-necked mallard alighting in a pool
Among marsh-marigolds and splashing wet
Green leaves and yellow blooms, like jewels set
In bright, black mud, with clear drops crystal-cool. . . ."

This is the clear vision of a poet who writes with his eye on the object. The child-like simpleness of Robert Graves and the terrible bitterness of Siegfried Sassoon in "Repression of War Experience" are all that remain worthy of the name of poetry.

For the rest we can only say that to omit Ralph Hodgson and Wilfrid Owen and include —— and ——, shows an amazing aberration on "E. M.'s" part. Let us hope it is only temporary.

S. P. B. MAIS.

A SCOTS CRIMINOLOGIST.*

Mr. Roughead is a lawyer after Scott's own heart. Had Sir Walter been alive to-day it is easy to conceive how these two perfervid investigators would have worked to each other's hands, and the collaboration would have been a fortunate one for Scottish Letters. Mr. Roughead is a perfect mine of information on the criminal annals of Scotland. In that connection he has already done important and admirable service in his "Notable Trials Series"—especially those of "Deacon Brodie" and "Captain Porteous," as well as in his single volume, "Twelve Scots Trials," a work which Mr. Andrew Lang read in manuscript shortly before his lamented death, and for which he had engaged to write an Introduction. Had Mr. Lang lived to read this latest volume, he would have rejoiced over it as a contribution to Scottish Criminology unsurpassed by the indefatigable Pitcairn himself.

Mr. Roughead is not merely a diligent researcher in a domain which he has made peculiarly his own. He is also an accomplished literary stylist, and has in him the makings of an acceptable and successful novelist were he so minded to turn his pen in that direction. Within his vast and erudite storehouse—the gathering of years—there is no lack of material in respect of intrigue, and incident, and human characterisation, for the business of a modern romantic. Mr. Lang, as one happens to know, and as has been said, perused Mr. Roughead's "Trials" with avidity; and it is certain that R. L. Stevenson, no less than Walter Scott, would have been glad to seek for treasure in the same rich and varied field. Mr. Roughead, however, confines his attention almost entirely to the purely legal aspect of his studies and only to what is genuinely historic in the episode with which he is dealing.

There are eighteen separate papers in the book before us, running to 544 pages. At least fifteen of these papers are taken up with careers of perfidy and corresponding

* "The Riddle of the Ruthvens and other Studies." By William Roughead. 25s. net. (Green & Son.)

Courtyard of Gowrie House, 1789.

From an engraving by Sparrow.

From "The Riddle of the Ruthvens," by William Roughead (Green & Son).

deeds of infamy. This is the only bond of association among them—their exemplification of the darker and seamier side of the national life, and of customs and superstitions which, luckily, are long matters of the past. We can only refer to one or two of Mr. Roughead's arresting articles. That which gives the book its title does not pretend to solve the eternal mystery centring in Gowrie House—a mystery never likely to be solved till the Day of Judgment, as a quaint Scotswoman suggested to Mr. Lang. Mr. Roughead inclines to the side of the Ruthven youths, and it cannot be denied that his masterly exposition of the story considerably helps the hypothesis that King James alone was the real offender. There may have been no preconcerted plot on either side, and an explanation may be found in the theory of an accidental brawl, in which ungovernable tempers and passions kindled to white heat, ended the day so disastrously. But it is very probable that James was the *fons et origo* of the whole ugly business.

Belief in witchcraft and a personal domination of the devil was common to every Scottish parish two or three centuries ago. James the Sixth (James, in some ways, is the *bête noire* of the book) was largely responsible for much of the agony and suffering which followed those suspects of his time. He gloried in tracking them down: in listening to confessions too obviously evoked by the application of torture: and he had no compunction—this "high and mighty Prince" to whom the preface of the Authorised Version of the Bible is addressed—in sending those unfortunate persons to a fiery death on the Castle Hill of Edinburgh, or wherever their terrible fate might be. The affair of the Witches of North Berwick, for instance, will ever stain the record of James's cowardly kingship. The man who could not intercede for his mother, who would do nothing to save her, could scarcely hope to escape the judgment of posterity, which sees in him a weak, vain, everlastingly suspicious and utterly selfish mortal, who imagined that because he possessed some literary talent, and a supposed sanctity, he was therefore specially obnoxious to Satan and his minions. Even "Bloody Mackenzie" condemned "those cruel and too forward judges who burn persons by thousands as guilty of this crime."

Mr. Roughead's best chapters are concerned with the notorious Robert McQueen, Lord Braxfield, the Lord Hermiston of Stevenson's unfinished "Weir of Hermiston." Among the Laing Manuscripts in Edinburgh University Library Mr. Roughead discovered a curiously happy defence of the Lord Justice Clerk. This was written in 1837 by Alexander Young of Harburn, an Edinburgh Writer to the Signet, son of the minister of Hutton on Dryfe, in Dumfriesshire. Young (who had known Braxfield intimately) desired to correct some misstatements in the first edition of Lockhart's "Life of Scott"— and also to clear Braxfield's character from certain imputations on the part of Lord Cockburn. Lockhart had narrated the story (which really belongs to Lord Kames) how Braxfield (as he alleged) had sentenced to death an old friend convicted of forgery, with whom he used to play chess, (Braxfield never played chess) observing, "An' noo, Donal', my man, I think I've checkmated ye for ance!" This, and much else which for years passed as coin from the Braxfield mint, Young declared to be spurious and unworthy of the man, despite his eccentricities and lurid irreverencies. But as Young wrote his defence nearly forty years after Braxfield had disappeared from the Bench, it is possible that he was looking back on the past in the too soft light of Fancy, and that, as is not seldom the case with the very aged, Charity's angel controlled his thoughts and guided his pen. Stevenson's hero is a first rate picture of the actual and historical Braxfield, and even had Young's paper been known to Stevenson, it is unlikely that he would have altered his portrait in any way.

Foot-notes to the "Heart of Midlothian" on "Nicol Muschet" and the "Master of Sinclair": the "Abduction of Jean Kay," referred to in Notes to "Rob Roy": the crimes of "Auld Auchindrayne" which Scott immortalised in a tragedy—the weakest thing he wrote: the adventures of that brace of arch-scoundrels, David Haggart and James Mackcoull: an account of "Antique Smith," the modern literary forger, and an illuminating Note on Edinburgh's poet, Robert Fergusson—Burns's "elder brother in the Muse"—are among the "other studies" which make up an exceptionally notable piece of work. It is by far the best thing Mr. Roughead has done. There is not a dull page in his book, nor can there be a reader who will not ask for yet another series of these so satisfying and fascinating mystery tales of a country that contains so much of the mysterious and romantic elements.

W. S. CROCKETT.

AN IRISH REBEL.*

If Connolly was the brain of the Irish Rebellion of Easter Week, 1916, Pearse was its soul. He was a poet and idealist right through, with a streak of shrewd common sense which went to the making of what should have been a great schoolmaster. His ideas on the subject are well known. He found out a boy's best and fostered it; he put his boys on their honour and believed what they said; he set a steady ideal before them. He should have been Ireland's first Minister of Education if he had not gone down in the catastrophic rebellion; yet he would have said perhaps that dying, he set his greatest and most enduring lesson. The writer of this little book, one of Pearse's schoolboys, gives us some valuable things. He disposes of the myth that Pearse trained up his boys to fight in the rebellion, saying indeed that he was concerned at the martial activities of some of his boys in the Easter rising. To be sure, the figures of the old Irish heroes loomed large in the spiritual atmosphere of the school. Pearse loved the autobiography of Wolfe Tone, the greatest of Irish rebels, as he loved Shakespeare and Milton. He would have had little patience with a people who could not or would not fight; and Mr. Ryan remembers him admitting the truth of Thomas MacDonagh's "Bedad, that's consistent!" when a pupil of St. Erda's joined up for the war. This is a loving and disarming tribute. We could do with many more personal sketches of Pearse, like this of the last hours in the Post Office:

> "All was dark within on the Wednesday evening, . . . the fires glared: distant volleys could be heard: around lay men sleeping on the floors: others stood on guard at the windows peering through the sandbags at the strangest spectacle men have seen in Dublin. He sat upon a barrel, looking intently at the flames, very silent. . . . Suddenly he turned to me. 'It was the right thing to do, was it not?' he asked curiously. 'Yes,' I replied in astonishment. He gazed back at the leaping and fantastic blaze. . . . 'And if we fail it means the end of everything, Ireland, Volunteers, all?' 'I suppose so,' I replied. He spoke again: 'When we are all wiped out, people will blame us, condemn us. But for this the war would have ended, and nothing would have been done. After a few years they will see the meaning of what it tried to do.' . . . 'Dublin's name will be glorious for ever,' he said with passion. 'Men will speak of her as one of the splendid cities.' He was one of the most occupied men in that dangerous front room, superintending a hundred details, cheering the wounded, firing anew the devotion of his comrades within that furnace. . . . When we are tempted to grudge Pearse's immolation to his political ideals two pictures rise before us: the first, that gallant captain in green, facing solemnly a hundred dangers, walking as serenely to his death. The second that head master who would have answered with a quick smile and eager gesture—'Ah, impossible!'"

Mr. Ryan makes his hero real and human. The strange, gentle soul in Pearse that made him weep over a dead kitten, and give up gardening for a day because he had accidentally killed a worm, was not inconsistent with that other side of him which made him "love a fighter" against wrongs and stupidities, and cruelties, and all old fossilised superstitions and ignorances.

KATHARINE TYNAN.

* "The Man Called Pearse." By Desmond Ryan. 4s. 6d. net. (Dublin: The Talbot Press.)

THREE NOVELS.*

What Tom Leeds thought of Bridget Tinhampton—"There she was, able far above the average, and attractive, surely, to any man who valued brains, wit and character"—is the epitome of "Full Circle." An interesting book, it makes an appeal to clever people; brains inform it; it has even more to it than wit and character, but too much space is filled with dead stuff. It analyses where it should be giving the incident that reveals character, and though it has some emotion, it has not enough to add that touch of the universal without which novels are only a pretty trick of the human intellect.

A book is like a tree. By some natural process it produces a lot of dry woody matter, which should be cut away, leaving only the live shoots; but few and far between are the authors who are willing to hack out even the driest of leafless boughs. "Full Circle" pruned would have been a finer book; as it is, the study of the Tinhampton family, people too boneless to grasp at the big things of life, people whom nature treats roughly, shouldering one into a convent, leaving the others for the most part unmarried, is ably done. Such people do not matter as a family, they are dying out; they will not leave many descendants, but they matter as individuals; they matter, poor things, to themselves. Bridget, the working bee, is the woman the economic conditions of to-day have produced; she is portrayed with loving care, contrasted cleverly with Eliza, the simple everyday creature who, accepting her destiny of wife and mother, will grow in grace because to her will fall the good and bad weather of big experiences.

The writer who long ago enchanted us with "The Dark Lanthorn" and "The Magnetic North" has given us in "The Messenger" the story of Greta Schwartz, a spy. The old charm is present, the attention is held from the first page to the last. The first part of the story is laid in the household of a Government official. The daughter's German governess is a spy—a spy of the good old-fashioned kind, handsome, clever, extravagant and strong-willed. When run to earth she is with true British clemency returned to Germany and, though the hero knows that the buttons on her ulster are English sovereigns covered with cloth, he is not sufficiently patriotic to draw the attention of Scotland Yard to the fact. In the second part the characters dodge about between America and England in order to give us the horrors of the submarine campaign, and the interest is not so well maintained. As a writer of spy stories Mrs. Belloc Lowndes is more successful than Miss Robins, and yet every now and then we get a touch of the latter's incomparable magic as, on page 260, when the submarine, having torpedoed the ship, rises and stands away to southward. "'They're hailing us,' the captain said with bitter mouth." The sentence hits you, it is fine, and you pray that Miss Robins may presently turn from spy stories to give us such another book as "The Dark Lanthorn."

Miss G. B. Stern has kept us waiting some time for "Children of No Man's Land," but the waiting, as it has produced a finer book than any she has hitherto written, has been worth while. Always amusing, she has now tackled a theme of some magnitude, a theme with which she is well qualified to deal—the position of the Jews in the war.

This cosmopolitan people, still as great wanderers as when they followed their flocks from pasture to pasture in the Middle East, cannot be said to belong to any one European country. They have relations with all, relatives in all; but the German Jew is not a German, he has not married a German and quite probably a brother of his lives in London and another in Paris. To such folk the war was an even greater tragedy than to us. When they joined our armies—as they did—they knew they would find their relatives in the opposing forces. Brother might at any moment "go over the top" to find, in some German trench, his brother. To give an instance, a Jewish family here received, at the same time, news of the death of their son fighting for England and of their nephew fighting for Germany, and did not know, poor souls, whether the one boy might not have shot the other. The poignancy of such a situation far transcends any with which we were faced. Add to it the problems of naturalisation with which Miss Stern deals and you get a fair idea of the terrible position during the war of this unhappy people.

"Children of No Man's Land" is an interesting book, and Miss G. B. Stern is to be congratulated on it. It should greatly enhance her reputation.

C. A. DAWSON SCOTT.

* "Full Circle." By M. A. Hamilton. 7s. (Collins.)—"The Messenger." By Elizabeth Robins. 7s. (Hodder & Stoughton.)—"Children of No Man's Land." By G. B. Stern. 7s. (Duckworth.)

EX CATHEDRA.*

Though all these gathered essays have seen the light before, to those who have not referred to the works in which they originally appeared they will be quite new reading, and as such they are welcome. The most of them were first printed in the "Cambridge History of English Literature," though a number of the titles have been altered. One cannot mistake Mr. Charles Whibley's sound scholarly qualities. There are few men of letters better versed than he in the highways and by-ways of Tudor literature and in the literary history of the period, and one is made aware that behind the instances of his knowledge here shown there lies a vast reservoir of learning from which he can draw unreservedly. He has no lack of what Rossetti called "fundamental brain-work"; and this learning has a cloistered virtue, in the best sense of the phrase. These studies are almost as historical as they are literary. They form no mere record of facts, though facts are not neglected but are allotted their rightful position. Mr. Whibley has, *inter alia*, the historical mind for envisaging the past with a lively retrospect, and has, moreover, a spirit of wide tolerance and sympathy for the humane letters of the more remote periods of our literature. The same urbane spirit is traceable in his contribution on Beaconsfield to "Chambers's Cyclopædia of English Literature" and it likewise informs his sympathetic epitome of George Wyndham's career in the beautiful introduction to Wyndham's "Essays in Romantic Literature."

Mr. Whibley brings out prominently the thirst for universality and encyclopædic knowledge that begat in the Tudor and Elizabethan translators and chroniclers their far-reaching claims in literary work. He makes us fully realise what an immense debt the Elizabethan dramatists, Shakespeare and Webster, Marston and Massinger, owed to the Tudor translators, to such works as Painter's "Palace of Pleasure" and Warner's "Menæchmi." The dramatists borrowed freely from such sources for their plots, and to Arthur Golding's translations Shakespeare was indebted in no small degree. Another point that the author emphasises is the extraordinary debt of England to Spain in matters literary during the latter part of the sixteenth century.

It is difficult in a book that consists entirely of rare delights to single out any one study above another for commendation, but perhaps Mr. Whibley has reached the full fruition of his art in his record of Sir Walter Ralegh. An occasional touch of the Elizabethan conceit infects his style and colours it with a robust charm. Not content with mere enumeration of Ralegh's exploits, Mr. Whibley indulges freely in sincere praise of his versatile gifts. The author's sympathetic profiles of Rochester and Buckhurst in "The Court Poets" are excellently done and incite the reader's admiration for his critical acumen. The vignettes of Congreve and other Restoration dramatists are charged with a liveliness that harmonises with the town and society life of the period. While lettered men of action rather than of leisure find favour in these studies,

* "Literary Studies." By Charles Whibley. 8s. 6d. net. (Macmillan.)

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rogues and scoundrels are the kind of writers, for the most part, who throng Mr. Whibley's pages, and when he limns the lettered vagabonds who inhabit his "Underworld of Letters," he hits off "their untidy talent" and their loose ways with a felicitous word and phrase. It was a time when "Parnassus spoke the language of the market, and Apollo, travestied, became a Tabarin," when the streets were filled with "campaign wenches" and "lame mumpers." An acute study of Jonathan Swift brings up the rear of the book, and, with a show of good reason, Mr. Whibley takes strong exception to Thackeray's virulent attack upon Swift in the "English Humourists."

A prevailing sense of unity presides over this book, but in little measure can it be defined as a connected account of the lettered and scholarly world from the time of Henry VIII. to that of Queen Anne. Though the flats are not "jined," there are connecting threads that link up the whole with adequate finish. Much of the book's appeal is due to Mr. Whibley's careful craftsmanship, to his well-ordered prose, which is both lucid and terse. One can only repeat what has been already indicated, that the spirit of the book is that of felicity, and to the browser in those fields of far-off days, as well as to those deeply versed in each or any particular phase, the book makes happy reading.

W. M. PARKER.

THOMAS COUTTS, BANKER.*

"It is said of some men that whatever they touch turns to gold. If that were all that could be said of Thomas Coutts, his life might have merited half a column of a Biographical Dictionary, or at least have served to point the moral of a scandalous pamphlet. It is true that slowly, steadily, and in the course of sixty years' unremitting attention to business he acquired a fortune which in these days would be noticeable, but by no means extraordinary. His life is worth writing, not because he was the creator and in part the proprietor of Coutts' Bank, but because he became a power in his own land and outside it as the friend and adviser of kings and princes and ministers of State. Rank appealed to him, the amenities and even the splendour of wealth delighted him; but he cared for none of these things in comparison with the ordering of his own life after his own sense of right, and as he willed it to run its course. The secret of his management of the great was not only the *flair* of the financial potentate, who knew when to be lavish with his loans and when to tighten his purse-strings, but the magnetic force of personal dignity."

In the foregoing outline Mr. Coleridge brings Thomas Coutts before us in both his private and official capacities. He was essentially self-reliant. Whatever line of action he felt himself called upon to take that line he took regardless of opposition and convention, regardless also of consequences. His first wife he found in his brother's household, namely the nursemaid of his niece; his second was the celebrated actress, Harriot Mellon. It is commonly supposed that before he married the latter she was his mistress, but this Mr. Coleridge denies, his contention being that there is no positive evidence that such was the case. Platonic friendship is always looked upon with suspicion, and Thomas Coutts cannot justly have considered the world harsh or uncharitable in its judgment. There was a strain of insanity in his family on both the paternal and maternal sides, and his eccentricities may possibly be attributable to that source.

The famous banking firm of Coutts & Co., which at the end of last year was amalgamated with the National Provincial and Union Bank of England, is the modern representative of the bank of John Campbell and George Middleton which was founded at the close of the seventeenth century at "The Signe of the Three Crownes" next to the Globe Tavern in the Strand, and was then the only bank in London west of Temple Bar. Campbell died in 1712 and the banking concern was then conducted by Middleton until 1729 when the son of the former was admitted as junior partner, whose sister (Mary) was married to Middleton. In 1741 David Bruce (a nephew of Middleton) joined the firm until his death ten years later. George Middleton died in 1746 and on the demise of David Bruce in 1751 George Campbell was until 1755 the sole representative. In the previous year (1754) James Coutts, of the firm of Coutts Brothers & Co. of Edinburgh, founded by the Coutts brothers' father, John Coutts, Lord Provost of that city, came to London to visit his brothers Patrick and Thomas who were in charge of the London branch of the firm, in Jeffreys Square, St. Mary Axe. During this visit he "met, perhaps loved, and in 1755 married Mary Peagrim, who lived with her bachelor uncle George Campbell, and was destined to inherit his fortune." James Coutts severed partnership with his brother John of the Edinburgh bank and was taken into Campbell's bank as partner and joint-proprietor. Five years later George Campbell died and James Coutts took his younger brother, Thomas, as his partner. "At length, in June, 1775, Thomas Coutts bought out his brother James, and for a short time reigned both as owner and sole proprietor of the Strand banking-house." As the years passed others were added to the firm, but so long as he lived Thomas Coutts was the predominant and guiding spirit.

Mr. Coleridge has done his part well, and has produced a most interesting record of a unique personality. It can hardly be described as a set biography for the work consists chiefly of letters written principally by Coutts, accompanied by extensive explanatory matter. Nearly all the correspondence is printed for the first time. The book owes its origin to the discovery in 1907 of a large collection of letters and other documents which had been consigned to the partners of the bank by Thomas Coutts's widow. These were handed to Mr. Coleridge with the suggestion that a selection should be made with a view to publication. Undoubtedly, as the author observes, the life of Thomas Coutts is "markedly a human document," and the love story of the septuagenarian makes uncommonly good reading. Apart from this episode he came in contact with all sorts of important and interesting historical and other persons. Particularly attractive are the chapters entitled "An Embassy to Frascati" and "The Cardinal of York," relating to Henry Benedict, Cardinal Duke of York, the younger son of the Old Pretender. Coutts visited the Cardinal in 1790 and on his return to England had an audience with George III. "to whom I did not omit to give" [he informs the *King de jure*] "a particular detail of the honours I received at Frascati, and of the uncommon politeness as well as the elegant and princely manner in which they were conferred. Neither did I fail to notice the very handsome and most liberal terms in which such sentiments of the character were expressed." Equally urbane was "the King *de facto*" in the expression of his regard for the family of Stuart, "who were worthy of all good men's attention, were it only for their misfortune." Details relating to the great Earl of Chatham, his widow, his son, William Pitt, Charles James Fox, and a host of others are equally interesting. Among them should be mentioned Clementina Walkinshaw, the mistress of the Young Pretender and a distant connexion of Thomas Coutts.

We wish that there were some prospect of the appearance of a cheaper edition, but fear such is very unlikely for some time to come. Forty-two shillings is a stiff price for many who are now labelled the "new poor." Another edition would give the author an opportunity of correcting no inconsiderable number of what are undoubtedly nothing but misprints. A careful reader will be able to correct these himself, but a less perfunctory going over of the proof-sheets should have made this unnecessary. We refer chiefly to dates, but one letter stated to have been written to Lord Stair was clearly sent to Colonel Crawfurd.

Mr. Coleridge must be a great admirer of his grandfather's brother-poet, "the giant—Wordsworth." We have traced about fifteen quotations in the text to that poet.

S. BUTTERWORTH.

* "The Life of Thomas Coutts, Banker." By E. H. Coleridge. 42s. net. (John Lane.)

THE WAYS OF PEACE.*

A League of Nations for peace and good will is an ancient aspiration. One hesitates to call it a political ideal, because, to the world of politics, an ideal is always something to be derided and destroyed. A political ideal was nailed to the cross at Golgotha by the practical politicians of Jerusalem. The ideal of peace in a world of good will was sung by angels on Christmas Day and crucified by men on Good Friday.

There have always been in the world many important persons to whom war and the constant threat of war are sources of profit, place and power, and by whom, therefore, war has been declared the noblest work of man and peace the habitual occupation of traitors. Those who preach peace nearly always pay for their ideal with their lives; those who preach war pay for their ideal with the lives of others. Men can always be moved most easily by panic, and the war-mongers see that they are often so moved. The criminal fools who cry "fire" in a theatre are as nothing to the criminal knaves who cry "war" in the world. Is it a matter for laughter or despair that our vociferous spirits are already crying aloud for the next war? Only an hour or two ago, I was reading one of the sixpenny weeklies, and found there an urgent and powerful appeal for an immediate allied war against Russia. Why? Because if we don't make war against Russia now, Russia will make war against us by and by!

But I refuse to despair. I cling to the belief that man will be saved in the end by his sense of humour. Let man once begin really laughing at the antics of these pen-pushing patriots who are heroically prepared to shed every drop of their subscribers' blood, and the world will be saved from the last of its palæolithic traditions, a ritual of human sacrifice.

Suppose we admitted everything that can be urged against a League of Nations for peace: even then, isn't it worth the attempt? Consider calmly all that happened between August, 1914, and November, 1918, and you will surely not dare to say that any attempt to save mankind from a repetition of that unparalleled shame is not worth making! I should not dream of intruding political controversy into these peaceful and pleasant pages; but there are some matters that have ceased to be questions of politics and have become questions of ethics. Slavery, for instance, is such a question, and there are others still awaiting settlement. When people argue that a League of Nations for peace, or self-government for Ireland, are bound to fail, they forget the crushing retort that awaits them, namely, that nothing could be more utter and abject than the failure of no league of nations for peace, or of no self-government for Ireland. And when our true-blue war-loving patriots deny the possibility of a League of Nations, do they unpatriotically forget the British Empire? Or, if they want an example with more dangerously artificial frontiers, do they forget the United States of America, which is, in fact, nothing but a League of Nations?

An immediately effective union of all states is not to be looked for with "such a being as man in such a world as the present." But an ideal of peace is something to hope for and to work for. The individual contribution that each of us can make to the building of a better world is something that is at once the simplest and hardest of human efforts: it is to believe—through good report and ill, through obloquy and ribaldry, to believe unshakably. The doctrine of justification by faith cuts deep into human life. What we do in doubt and indifference will not prosper; what we do in faith and hope will have its success, late or soon.

It is comforting, however, when our beliefs have some support from knowledge. Let our historians and philosophers hearten us with their honest reports—in such volumes as the two now before us, which we have been slow in mentioning, but which really need no discussion, their purpose being clear and their matter indisputable. Miss Elizabeth York's volume is historical, and discusses proposed Leagues of Nations through the ages from the Amphictyonic Council to the Holy Alliance. From the leagues of ancient Greece she passes to a consideration of Dante's *De Monarchia*; then to Henri Quatre and the "Great Design"; then to Grotius' *De Jure Belli et Pacis*; then to William Penn's "European Diet"; then to Saint-Pierre's "Perpetual Peace"; then to Rousseau's doctrine of Federation; then to Kant's "Everlasting Peace"; and then to Bentham on International Law. Her ten chapters are as a rule biographical as well as historical, and each is supported by an appendix of cited authorities. The whole book, soundly and attractively written, is just what the plain man who is not specifically a student of history needs for his enlightenment.

Dr. Sarolea's volume begins as a definite criticism of the recent Peace, which he describes as a peace of violence, not a peace of reconstruction. While the man in the street still imagines that the Peace has something to do with President Wilson's approved Fourteen Points, the reactionaries are openly boasting that it is not the Peace of Wilson and the League, but the Peace of Clemenceau and La Revanche. Dr. Sarolea's volume is not merely critical, but constructive. His wide knowledge of European politics and history has never been shown to greater advantage than in the lucid pages of this inspiring and helpful volume. Like Miss York's book it is, in a sense, the story of failure, but it is also the story of perpetual hope. Slowly but surely the foundations of peace are being laid. Such books as these will strengthen our faith, and deepen our reasoned conviction that the ancient ways of hate and war are the ways of destruction, and that the way of life must still be sought in the words said daily, though with little faith, these many centuries: *in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis.*

GEORGE SAMPSON.

* "Leagues of Nations, Ancient, Mediæval and Modern." By Elizabeth York. 8s. 6d. net. (The Swarthmore Press.)—"Europe and the League of Nations." By Charles Sarolea, D.Litt., Ph.D., LL.D. 6s. net. (Bell.)

EVANDER.*

This latest book by Eden Phillpotts is a delightful fantasy in which modern problems—marriage, divorce, wine, wisdom and religion—are dealt with in modern phraseology, but with the ancient and romantic setting of old Olympus. We are taken back to the early days when the gods visited the earth, and interested themselves actively in the affairs of men. A noble Emperor of ancient Rome has decided that the blessed state of matrimony must no longer be looked upon as an exclusive patrician privilege, but that its inestimable blessings shall now be shared by the middle and even the lower classes. Like most other innovations this royal decree is looked on askance for some time, till Livia and Festus, greatly daring, become the pioneers of marriage in their humble village. Both are worshippers of Bacchus, and all goes merrily, till along comes Evander, a worshipper of Apollo. He, being an "intellectual," is more interesting in conversation than Festus the simple woodman, and Livia being much flattered by his notice, turns to the worship of Apollo, or rather of his minister, Evander. Festus insists that she continue to worship his god, and opposes her with hard words and blows until she thinks herself a martyr. Bacchus, in his wisdom, advises Festus to leave her alone, and she will soon return to his way of thinking, but while the husband is conferring with the gods, the wife has eloped with the prophet. However she soon tires of Evander's austerity; his plain living and high thinking become a weariness to her when their novelty has worn off, and she returns, a penitent, to her injured husband—

* "Evander." By Eden Phillpotts. (Grant Richards.)

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thus giving Evander's self-love a much needed lesson, which he takes to heart.

"The woman you gave me," he says to Apollo, "might have been won by sympathy, but proved invulnerable to doctrine. Some people (and I was one of them) seem to set a good example like a trap."

The whole thing is a kindly satire on modern life and its everyday affairs, on the minor poet, the changeableness of public opinion, the love of talk and self-glorification of the "intellectuals" who "are the very last persons to the fore when anything has to be done." Apart from the story the book is worth reading for the sake of the well-turned epigrams and delicious witticisms scattered broadcast throughout its pages. Incidentally it may be observed that the jovial and kindly Bacchus comes out in a better light than the glorious but unsmiling Apollo.

H. B.

A NEW CHRISTIAN YEAR.*

Miss Stoddart has here produced a book of strong appeal—a book that can re-impress the Church's year upon every reader, can give the breadth of that year's meaning to thoughtful minds, and can arrest and appeal to the minds of the less thoughtful. "The purpose of this book," the author says in her preface, "is to illustrate from life and literature the Scriptures appointed for use on the Sundays and Holy Days of the Christian year. . . . The order followed is that of the Epistles, Gospels, and the Lessons as ordered in the Prayer Book." In her introductory chapter Miss Stoddart wisely and well points to, and commends, unity of worship. "In hours of danger and sorrow, and in the morning joy of a great deliverance, Christian hearts are strangely drawn towards united worship." Roman Catholic and Methodist, Church of England and Presbyterian, may pray together and sing together the grand *Te Deum*. "The Book of Common Prayer is one of the most precious possessions of the English-speaking race." "Epistles, Gospels, Lessons, are all part of the common heritage." They are; and in the pages that follow, men and women of all creeds reveal the truth that Miss Stoddart has uttered.

The plan of the book is simple and impressive. We open at the beginning, at Advent; and after remarks and quotations showing forth the solemnity, the beauty and the opportunity of this beginning of the Church's year, the chapter goes on from point to point. Taking the Prayer Book's practical warning "keep out of debt," Miss Stoddart, after mentioning the shock felt by Bassanio, in "The Merchant of Venice," at the result of his thoughtless extravagance, passes on to George Eliot's character, Lydgate, in "Middlemarch," the young surgeon whose life is saddened and shortened by the galling chain of debt. From the subject of debt the Epistle passes on to "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour," and many beautiful illustrations are given revealing the force, the value, the essential need of love. And so on again, from point to point, the main truths of Advent's teaching are shown in quotations from preacher, historian, poet, novelist. The book is a veritable anthology, every page arrests attention and interest, every chapter carries the reader forward with sincere eagerness to the next. The twenty chapters are the outcome of an intimate knowledge of the Scriptures, and the success of the idea is the result of an unusual knowledge of books and a distinct gift for selection. Miss Stoddart may pride herself upon having given us a volume full of inspiration and suggestion for preachers, and of charm and instruction for the lay public. It is a volume to keep near by and dip into. It introduces us to anecdotes that make us want to read or re-read the biographies, to scenes and opinions that make us want to read or re-read the novels and essays, to poems that make us desire a closer knowledge of the poet's works; it creates interest by its excellence and retains it by its variety.

* "The Christian Year in Human Story." By Jane T. Stoddart. 7s. 6d. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

ARCHAIC ENGLAND.*

The title page of this book raises expectations which are doomed to disappointment. The author belongs to the school which wishes to show that the culture of pre-Roman Britain was part of a widely spread religious system with an attendant civilisation to which we owe all that is best in modern Britain. Incidentally he asks us to believe that the landing of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, whom he calls "Germans" with a rather contemptible attempt to prejudice the case, was an "untoward and discreditable" episode and to see in the return of the "Britons" with Duke William of Normandy the destruction of "the temporary ascendancy of Germanic kultur." To a writer of this school it matters little that Bretons formed but a small portion of the motley host that followed William to England and that the leaders and a large proportion of their followers were of Scandinavian stock, racially more closely allied to the Anglo-Saxon than to the Germanic branch of the great Gothic race.

The book is beautifully printed, and contains upwards of 500 illustrations, collected from very varied sources. Among these are many representations of British and other coins and a plan of an unrecorded earthwork. With these it brings together a mass of curious reading and out-of-the-way lore, but handled in such an artless and uncritical way that even when the author seems to be on the right track one hesitates to take him as a guide. What faith, for instance, can we put in a writer who bases arguments equally on the legends, certainly ancient, which ascribe the origin of the British race to Troy, and on the Foreword and Afterword of the Prose Edda, which give Thor the same origin, but are the late product of an Icelandic scholar of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries who was desirous of linking Northern to Classical mythology.

As regards the aids to deciphering prehistory referred to on the title page, though references to megalithic monuments and earthworks are numerous, we cannot find that these studies add to our knowledge of the subject or give any clear evidence of the meaning or historic significance of these remains. Avebury and Stonehenge appear several times, the name of the former being equated on one page with *abri*, "the generic term for a shelter or refuge," and on another with "Alberich, the German equivalent for Auberon." The author further explains that "*brich, brick, brook*, etc., are fundamental terms and are radically *ber uch*. Brightlingsea . . . is pronounced by the natives Bricklesea, and there are innumerable British Brockleas, Brixtons, Brixhams, Brockhursts, etc."

"Stonehenge used," he tells us, "to be entitled Stonehengels, which may be modernised into the *Stone Angels*, each stone presumably standing as a representative of one or other of the angelic hierarchy." He then proceeds to tell the legend of the massacre of the Britons by the Saxons to account for the translation of the *Stone Angels* into "the Hanging Stones, or Gallow Stones." We suggest that the invention of the legend, or its transference to Britain, to account for the name, is at least as probable.

Earthworks mentioned are chiefly the minor ones, though Maiden Castle, the huge camp between Dorchester and Weymouth, is referred to as probably "a colossal Troy Town or Drayton." Troy Towns are usually mazes and the author has apparently never seen Maiden Castle or studied the plan in Mr. Hadrian Allcroft's "Earthwork of England," a book to which he refers elsewhere, or he would have seen that at Maiden Castle the mazes are purely defensive and confined to the entrances at either end of the camp. In another place he quotes a guide-book description of the "Troy Town" in St. Agnes, Isles of Scilly, without apparently being aware that in this case Troy Town is a miniature only some inches in diameter.

With customs and faerie superstitions the author is more at home and from a very wide reading brings together

* "Archaic England: An Essay in Deciphering Prehistory from Megalithic Monuments, Earthworks, Customs, Coins, Place-Names and Faerie Superstitions." By Harold Bayley. 25s. net. (Chapman & Hall.)

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"OUR OPPORTUNITIES ARE VASTER."

—MR. LLOYD GEORGE.

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much that is valuable and suggestive, while as regards coins he is doubtless right in arguing that the quaint devices and strange representations of certain animals on early British coins have probably a symbolic and mythological meaning, and are not mere endeavours of barbaric art to express itself, or to imitate the productions of Greece and Rome.

But it is in the matter of place-names and etymology that the author's methods are most revolutionary and most distracting. The method may be best described in his own words:

"The term '*word*' I understand . . . as the dictionary defines it 'an oral or written sign expressing an idea or notion.' Thus I treat John as the same word as *Jane* or *Jean*, and it is radically the same word as *giant*, Old English *jeyantt*, French *geante*, Cornish *geon*. Jean is also the same word as *chien*, a dog—Irish *choin*; Welsh *chin* or *cyn*, and all these terms by reason of their radical *an* are cognate with the Greek *kuon*, a dog, whence *cyn*ical. The Gaelic for *John* is *Jain*, the Gaelic for *Jean* or *Jane* is *Sine*, with which I equate *shine*, *shone* and *sheen*, all of which have respect to the *sun*, as also had the Arabic *jinn*, *genii*, and '*Gian Ben Gian*,' a title of the fabulous world-ruler of the Golden Age."

On these principles the author identifies St. John with the Irish *Shaun* and "the British divinity Shony" whom he also evolves "from the primeval *Shen* at Shenstone near Lichfield." From the presence of a *St. John's* Well here near the church of St. John he suggests that the church was built on the site of an original *Shen stone*, and that similar "John stones" must have been plentiful in Scotland, as shown "by the common surname Johnstone."

Following on such lines the reader is led a giddy dance, rarely knowing whether a word is presented to him under its oldest known form or is what may be only a modern corruption. The reminder that the ascription of place-names to Anglo-Saxon personal names may be carried too far is doubtless salutary, but it is difficult to believe in the reconstruction of prehistory on the etymological lines followed by the author of this book.

ALBANY F. MAJOR.

Novel Notes.

THE LOST DIARY. By Horace Bleackley. 7s. net. (Nash.)

It depends entirely on your sense of humour as to whether you will enjoy this story or not. The plot concerns the Right Hon. Clement Venables, M.P., a middle-aged bachelor who has just become engaged, through the machinations of his aunt the Duchess of Frinton, to charming little Delia Carrington. In his youth, long before he becomes a staid M.P., Venables has had a decidedly gay time, a record of which is still in existence, in a diary which he used to keep, and which he has forgotten all about. There is a house party at Venables' place, among the guests being Delia and the austere Duchess of Frinton, when an old school friend of Venables' arrives bringing with him the fateful diary. Of course the diary gets lost in the house, and there is frantic juggling to keep it from the eyes of Delia and the Duchess. The book becomes a kind of game of rounders, with the result that nearly every one in turn gets hold of it and reads it, including Delia, who is thought to be something of a prude. However, instead of shocking her, it has the effect of making her understand and like Venables, whom she has always looked upon as being a bit of an old stick. The diary has still further adventures outside the house, before it finds a resting place on the back of the fire. Fortunately for the reader we are not given more than a few hints as to what the diary contains.

LEGEND. By Clemence Dane. 6s. net. (Heinemann.)

"Legend" has been hailed as a *tour de force*, as was Mr. Swinnerton's "Nocturne." Rapturous verdicts of that kind show how casual the average English novel still is: when we meet one with a definite form, a unity of expression and spirit, we exclaim "*tour de force*" in surprise and admiration. Certainly Miss Dane deserves our admiration. Satire is rarely practised artistically in England; the most notable exponents of modern satire, such as Mr. Belloc, are too preoccupied with general questions to give to their novels that devotion to character which can alone justify this form of fiction. Miss Dane proved her eye for character in "Regiment of Women"; and in "Legend" she has produced a novel which is better than her first book and greatly superior to her second. She has one astonishing weakness. Her men are almost entirely unreal. In this tale, Kent the painter, Flood the poet are the merest pegs—and they seem even more lifeless than they might, set beside the flaming vitality of Anita, Jenny and the dead heroine Madala Gray. Madala is dead before the book opens. And the story is an account of the way her friends discuss her and her inexplicable marriage on the night of her death. Jenny, who tells the tale, has never met Madala; Anita, her cousin, has been the dead novelist's closest friend. Yet Miss Dane makes us believe, from the first pages, that Anita understands nothing of the woman she has played Boswell to, while Jenny is really in tune with the ardent, beautiful spirit. You may read "Legend" for pure enjoyment, without any thought of its deeper significance. It is an attack on all hagiology. Is the truth ever told about the famous dead? Does not the disciple always betray the master, either with a kiss as Judas, or by a blow at his enemies, like Peter? Does even Jenny understand Madala? Did her husband? One can see early enough the falsehood of Anita's shrill vulgarities at Madala's acceptance of married love and of motherhood; but can one be sure that Jenny's view is true either? The questions cannot be answered. That one should ask them, should be anxious to pursue the history of Madala Gray, her husband and her friends is a tribute to Miss Dane's admirable art.

SIMON. By J. Storer Clouston. 6s. net. (Blackwood.)

"Simon" is a sensational yarn, full of thrills and exciting episodes, which should satisfy even the most exacting lovers of this type of story: a mystery, a romance and two murders are to be found between its covers. The main idea, though some may deem it frankly improbable, is ingenious, and makes a good theme for the author to work on. To give any proper idea of the plot one would have to give away part of the mystery of the story, which would be unfair to Mr. Clouston and to readers of the book, who will enjoy finding out for themselves who Simon really is and what becomes of him. It is an engrossing mystery, with the interest well sustained from beginning to end.

FELIX MORGAINE. By Josephine P. Knowles. 6s. net. (Methuen.)

Felix Morgaine, the new Dean of Winterbourne Cathedral, carries out a revolution in the church services during the absence of the bishop of the diocese abroad. A famous scientist preaches, a titled lady reads the lessons, and children sing poems and madrigals in the nave. The Dean's enemy is Canon Bulstrode, who is old-fashioned, and is scandalised by the innovations. Felix's cult appears to be the worship of beauty in nature, and is a form of pantheism. His personality exercises a wonderfully refining influence over the street children and the rough elements of the town. On the other hand he alienates many of the local élite and the middle classes. The new movement is discussed in the London press and in Parliament. When the Bishop returns, he convenes a public meeting, at which he invites both sides to state their case. Canon Bulstrode plays his trump card by charging the Dean with loose morals, substantiating his accusation with the fact that the Dean has been seen kissing a girl in his room. Luckily, the Bishop treats this as irrelevant. Meanwhile, the Dean has fallen in love with a beautiful Italian countess, whom he marries. The story closes with the Dean fighting on the Somme as a private, and the decision of the ecclesiastical authorities yet to be

promulgated. The author has written an interesting story. Many characters are introduced, and all of them are well portrayed. There is perhaps one failing, and that is that none of the characters opposed to the Dean are at all attractive. A conservative can be as sweet a man as a liberal, and the reformer may be as narrow minded as the reactionary. Some of the best features are the description of the effect of the war on the manners and dress of girls, the visit of the Dean to the old shepherd, and the controversy which raged in the press. The author has certainly the gift of writing, but theology is not her strong point.

THE DEATH DRUM. By Margaret Peterson. 6s. 9d. net. (Hurst & Blackett.)

"The Death Drum" is a dramatic East African story of love and revenge, in which a native superstition (that very few white people know anything about) plays a considerable part; it casts a sinister atmosphere around the thrilling scenes in Uganda at the time of a black rising. A striking contrast to these weird scenes is found in the glimpse of life in England which Tom Davis, a half-caste from Uganda, gets when he comes over to this country to start his scheme of revenge. The English girl, Sylvia Morris, whom he marries and takes back with him to Uganda, is chosen as the victim of his revenge because she is the sister of the man who has caused the death of Davis's own half-caste sister. Sylvia loves Davis sincerely, and marries him knowing that he is the son of a white father and a native mother, and that she will have race difficulties to face. The love is all on her side—at first; but as Davis grows to care for her he has a stern fight with himself to keep faithful to his plan of revenge. How he succeeds and at what cost, is told with great power by Miss Margaret Peterson, who handles her subject with uncommon ability and sympathetic understanding. It is an engrossing story that grips the imagination.

CATHY ROSSITER. By Mrs. Victor Rickard. 7s. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

If this novel were not convincingly modern in its style and in its frankness of dialogue, one would recognise it as a product of the period if only that it harps upon divorce and women's rights, and plays upon two familiar types of the day—the overstrung idealist and the hard-mouthed lady medico. These two and Colonel Jack Lorimer (presently M.P. and a knight) make up the trio of the story, with Jack as a rickety centrepiece, shallow, contemptible and false. Cathy, lovable and emotional, rebels against the taint of the aristocrat in her veins; Monica Henstock, the doctor, has no such ingredient and is a mere opportunist, with what remains of her conscience kept well in hand. Called in to attend on the credulous Cathy at the latter's country house, Monica, with Jack's connivance, consigns her to a private madhouse; and the scenes it affords, together with the maddening reassurances and blarney, the franker threats of stricter treatment, and the farce of the magistrate's visit of inspection, make some of the best and truest writing in the book. In the end she is rescued by Robert Amyas, and we have to wade through the cesspools of divorce before we reach a cheerful solution. But it is Cathy's character, consistent in irresponsibility, that makes the book what it is.

THE LONDON VENTURE. By Michael Arlen. With Drawings by Michel Sevier. 4s. net. (Heinemann.)

How is one to describe such a book as this? It is too charming to be called brilliant; has too much narrative to be called a series of essays, and is too much in the vein of the essayist to be classed as a story. Mr. Arlen is an Armenian, and tells you in a prefatory note that his own name (which he gives you) is so difficult to pronounce that, for practical reasons, he preferred to put a pseudonym on his title page. He begins to write after he has left London and can look back on it and see in remembrance how much better he had liked it than he thought he did while he was there. His outlook is fresh and individual. His sketches of people he had met in London, of the strangeness and beauty of London's streets and open spaces are

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touched in graphically, with an easy lightness and a delightful sense of humour, and the same humour and freshness and a shrewd philosophy of life are in his comments on men and women and things in general. Well-known names flit through his chapters, but his story is all of the witty, gracious, cruel, exquisite Shelmerdene and her loves—she comes and goes and elusively pervades the book throughout. One is tempted to quote copiously. You can scarcely turn a leaf without coming upon some vivid or delicate bit of description or narrative, some magic window opening gaily, cynically or with a thoughtful seriousness on what is best and worst in the ways of humanity. But it is too enjoyable a book to be sampled in quotations and we content ourselves with recommending it to all and sundry.

HIS MAJESTY'S WELL-BELOVED. By Baroness Orczy. 6s. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

The title of this "Historie," as the story is termed in the book, refers to Thomas Betterton, the actor, who was one of the King's Players in Charles the Second's evil reign. The authoress has reverted to the style of Richardson, writing her novel, not in many letters, but in one lengthy epistle. The lady to whom it is addressed scarcely appears in the intrigues described by her correspondent, John Honeywood. That humble clerk and scrivener—so he calls himself, being a hero-worshipper—does his best to explain away the questionable doings of Betterton, of whom the lady—and with cause—is jealous. As in Defoe's works the most emphatic words have capitals, which gives the "narrative" a quaint archaic air. This is quite in keeping with the time when the story is supposed to be written. But the tale is a very good one with ample intrigue and passion, both of the right and wrong sort. Betterton is beaten and revenges himself on the coxcomb who procures him the beating. In the end he forgoes his revenge to please a lady, who is not worthy of the sacrifice. The characters are well delineated, but in these democratic days the intolerable insolence of the aristocrats to the commoners sounds almost impossible. Charles himself does not appear, but the rotten state of things induced by his shameful rule is very excellently described.

CIRCUITS. By Philip Camborne. 6s. net. (Methuen.)

This is a delightful novel of Wesleyan life; one does not need to be a Wesleyan to enjoy the story of the Rev. Mark Frazer and his wife, of their friends, and of their family. The author has avoided the two tiresome features of novels which deal with English religious life outside the Anglican Church. These novels either describe the hero falling into agnosticism, or coquetting with the State Church; or else they are drenched in the provincial details of some little Bethel. Now, this novel describes thoroughly human people, old and young. The inside life of Wesleyan ministers is drawn with sympathy, but not over-coloured. There are three love stories, with some patter to set off their romance and humour, and they are held together in a certain unity. It is always a pleasure to come across evidences of originality in some well-worn field of fiction. "Circuits" has the note of freshness, and the note is not forced.

THE THEATRE QUEUE. By Arthur F. Wallis. (Sampson Low.)

Although it contains no dramatic plot, the interest in this story is powerful. The characters are well portrayed, not overdrawn and are true to their local atmosphere. It might be objected against the plot that there is no strong likelihood of the characters being involved one with another to such an extent, but this is a reasonable artifice to save overcrowding the stage and, indeed, to lend an added zest to the story. Ruth is a character with whom our sympathy grows in spite of ourselves as the story proceeds, and at the close we are aroused to something like admiration. Harry Lake is unsatisfactory—the author does not seem to have made up his mind about him—we feel a furtive dislike for Arnold who is apparently the hero of the story. The minor characters, with whom the temptation of most authors is to deal slovenly, are admirably treated. One is inclined to fear at times that it is a novel with a purpose, but the author subdues the tendency to be didactic just in time. Incidentally it is fair to admit that the discussion of trade unions, labour and capital is logical, opportune and well conducted.

THE FAR CRY. By Henry Milner Rideout. 7s. (Jarrolds.)

"The Far Cry" is a very fascinating and unusual tale. Although the action takes place amidst the golden glories of the South Seas with infinite opportunities for sensational writing, yet the author with commendable reticence contrives to keep the same within bounds. The book suggests the classic art of the Greek dramatists, as all violent action is not presented on the stage. Even the fight between the hero and the villain is described in a quiet, restrained manner, but very vividly. The strength of the book lies in what is not said: it is a triumph of suggestion. And pictures—every page is a picture—alluring with colour and life, and the clean splendour of primitive life, direct and impressively simple. The two empire-enlargers, who find Godbolt on the uninhabited islet, are real flesh and blood, the French gaiety of Tisdale contrasting pleasingly with the thoughtfulness of Wallace. But Godbolt is wonderfully drawn: he is not a character in a story, but an actual person, environed by the fairy glamour of true romance. And Katherine, the one woman in the book, is just as good. Their wooing is not set out at full length, but one feels that the absolute passion is there. Mr. Rideout's artistic instinct has told him that music alone can express the attitude of the lovers, and he suggests music, which awakens understanding. And all the characters are excellently drawn with few strokes but much vividness. Frave, the indomitable grandfather, Mace the villain, whose very reticence suggests deep depths of evil, Anak the native, physically strong but wanting in moral courage—and the bull-dog fighting strain for the matter of that—are all admirable. Nor must Satrap the Malay be forgotten, for although he is not a prominent figure he is real and true. Altogether Mr. Rideout may be congratulated on writing a very fine story: he shows a real mastery of his craft.

SUSIE. By the Hon. Mrs. Dowdall. 7s. net. (Duckworth.)

"Do you know Susie? You may even have loved her. She is as old as her sex and has many disguises; sometimes she is so deeply hidden that you would scarcely be able to see her. But her picture is given here as Nature made her and is offered with the kindest intentions to the future fathers of the race." Such is the preface to the Hon. Mrs. Dowdall's new book. Susie is a clever, though one is bound to admit, somewhat cruel study of character; whether she will be found amusing, distressing or despicable will depend very largely on the individual reader. At any rate Susie is Susie, and though she cannot be summed up in a word, this glimpse of her may give some inkling of the type she represents: "Susie went out very little and had no occupation at home. Her mind was a riot of femininity. She had been educated by elderly ladies, in whose ideas men figured as professional rivals, or interesting friends, or dangers to the community, or pupils' fathers. To Susie they came into none of these categories; so, finding nothing in her education to explain the mystery they suggested, she thought about them consciously or unconsciously all day. Their admiration became a thing to work for, like points to be scored in a game, and she played her cards to that end." It almost seems a pity that so able an author as the Hon. Mrs. Dowdall, who can portray so vividly people like Charles, and Cyril Fulton, Lucy, and Mrs. Jamieson (all minor characters in the story), should spend so much time on a character like Susie. However, here is Susie, offered with the "kindest intentions," we are assured, and it is up to those to whom she is offered to study her and understand her — if they can.

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The Bookman's Table.

THE BOOK-HUNTER AT HOME. By P. B. M. Allan. 10s. 6d. net. (Philip Allan & Co.)

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THE SUPREME SACRIFICE AND OTHER POEMS IN TIME OF WAR. By John S. Arkwright. 7s. 6d. net. (Skeffington.)

Our estimate of poems dealing with the war of 1914 is inevitably coloured by our attitude towards war in general and our beliefs concerning that particular war. Criticism of war poems is properly reticent, because so many of them express (or cover up) deep emotions which compel our sympathy and respect. This volume consists (with one exception) of poems written during the war. Mr. Arkwright sees England and the Allies fighting for the right and on the side of God, and he unhesitatingly believes that God helped them throughout. His faith never wavers and his attitude never changes; there is something impersonal about his outlook, although he can try to comfort the personal griefs of those around him. He is always serious, neither carried away by the pageantry and excitement of war nor depressed by its horror and sordidness. One cannot feel that he expresses the outlook of the fighting-man, but he respects him and therefore avoids patronising praise or gushing sentimentality. To those in sympathy with the author's point of view, and not disturbed by the events and tendencies around them, this volume will be found comforting and satisfying. Mr. Arkwright is both simple and sincere; he never writes for effect, but he says nothing very new, neither is his way of saying it striking or notable. Yet as a strictly topical volume his book fits in with the thoughts that have come to us all from time to time (or the thoughts we should wish to have had) during the past years, and therefore can claim a place in the records of our time. There are several illustrations by well-known artists, the most poetical of which is the "Pilgrim's Way," by Bruce Bairnsfather:

> "But truth and honour nerve his arm,
> And faith is yet his shield and stay;
> And God will save his soul from harm
> Who dares to tread the Pilgrim's Way."

THE MONTHLY CHAPBOOK. 1s. 6d. net. (The Poetry Bookshop.)

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